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[A DAUGHTER'S LOVE.]

FATE.

By the Author of "Nickleboy's Christmas-Box,"
"Maurice Durant," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man.

Chaos of thought and passion all confused,
Still by himself abused or disabused;
Created half to rise and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled;
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world. Pope.

Down in the now unfashionable region of the East there lies, a little apart from the swift, ever-running stream that rushes to and fro through the leading thoroughfare, a little hid-away nest of streets and squares called Spitalfields.

On either side of this oasis in the desert of drifting life sands rises the roar of ever-passing footsteps, the rattle and rumble of countless restless vehicles, and the indescribable hum of still more restless voices.

From the City to the green fields that lie beyond crowded Shoreditch and its suburbs on one side, and the great docks of the East End on the other, the living tide of human beings flows all day and nearly all night.

Between these rivers lie Spitalfields and Spital Square.

Years ago this was the fashionable spot in our modern Babylon.

The rich built themselves great houses and drove their heavy, much-beplated carriages through its streets.

The rich have gone to the West and taken their carriages with them, but their grand houses still remain, grand still and for ever, though with a dingy, faded, antique grandeur, for the elaborate carvings are blurred and smoked by the ever-passing fingers of the old man Time, and the elaborate gildings faded and dulled by his never-ceasing breath.

Huge, rambling places they are, with halls larger

than most of the modern villas, with rooms big enough to hold many a present-day fashionable cottage, with fireplaces that would swallow up a City clerk's income in coals, and passages through which a modern hansom cab could be driven with ease.

Mysterious old places some of them are, with queer and not altogether reputable legends attached to them, dark, crimson marks that will not be washed from their old oak floorings; high, iron-barred windows, suggestive of languishing prisoners, dark, bewildering cellars, with an odour of secrecy and crime, and huge cupboards, opening by elaborate springs, and leading to few know where.

Not only the houses but the streets in which they stand savour of the dead-and-gone past.

Some are narrow and solitary. Their old, foot-worn stones have almost forgotten the touch of shoe-leather, and in despair have comforted themselves by allowing blades of rank grass to crop between their interstices.

The tide of fashion has swept over and past them. These are deserted and solitary; others, wider perhaps and nearer the great thoroughfare outside, are still cognizant of life and action, but the feet that press them are the weary ones of silk weavers and their families, the relentless ones of the tax-gatherer, and the monotonous ones of the policeman.

In the outer ring are the vegetable market and the great steam factories, but in the centre the old houses, the old streets are still and quiet as a graveyard, and the place is nearly forgotten.

Take my hand, reader, and let us enter this old, red-bricked mansion.

It stands hidden away, shouldered back as it were in the corner of a grass-grown square.

Its old, heavy oak door is cracked and blistered by the sun.

The stone steps—five of them—are trodden into hollows at the middle, and flanked on either side by a rusty railing.

There is no area, but two blind circular windows barred with thick iron show that a cellar lies beneath.

There are two windows above—if windows they

can be called—seeing that out of ten panes five have been boarded up, and the sixth is rendered opaque by the thick layer of dust that might have been accumulating for centuries.

Passing outside, who would think of gazing at the ramshackle old place, or if gazing imagine that anything of life lies within it?

The hall is like its neighbours, a huge one, panelled with oak and walnut, polished perhaps at one time, but now dim and lack-lustre.

Facing the door rises a wide staircase; a pair of horses could drag a modern toy brougham up them without difficulty as far as space went.

Dust in the hall; dust here on the stairs; dust in the front room—if the dim light could reveal it—dust in all the others quaintly formed and more quaintly furnished; dust everywhere.

The front room—a large, dreary apartment panelled like the hall, and as lack-lustre—shows some signs of life.

Three or four chairs and a table are set upon a frayed but real Turkey carpet. An old carved cabinet, with all the noses of its figures rubbed off and most of their arms, rears its faded majesty against the farther wall. A few pictures, the subjects of which it is impossible to tell for dust and age, hang around three of the walls, the fourth being shrouded from view by a long, mysterious curtain that hangs from ceiling to floor in heavy folds, upon which the flickering of a small fire, burning in a huge and cavernous aperture, surmounted and surrounded by a tall and wide mantelpiece, throws a sullen glow.

And now for the life.

Look carefully through the room and descrie a lad sitting in an attitude of profound meditation, within the embrace of a monstrous, old-fashioned chair, whose back, carved with grotesque heads, seems to grin down upon his young head, whose fat, ponderous, misshapen arms seem to imprison his slender body.

The face, as much of it as can be seen by the fitful fire glow, is clouded by a look almost painful in its intensity of thought.



It is a face of fifteen, but wears the expression belonging to one of thirty.

The eyes are dark, deep and penetrating—too much so; they are the eyes of a troubled spirit, a morbidly inquiring mind, a puzzled, over-questioning, never-satisfied heart, gleaming through the masses of dark, overhanging hair, sometimes too through the fingers of the small, unnaturally white hand raised to part the hair from the forehead or shield the face from the heat of the fire.

Look now at the attitude unnaturally pensive and languid for one so young, unpleasantly suggestive of age and unrest, yet in perfect harmony with the pale face and restless eyes that are bent now upon the fire with a thoughtful frown and now raised toward the door with a glance of expectancy.

The waning day grows quickly into night, and the firelight grows brighter by the disappearance of the dim gleam through the dust-obscured windows, and still the lad sits.

Presently his ear—rendered acute by the silence reigning around, and the still greater silence within him—catches the sound of approaching footsteps, and he stoops, not rises, and throws a fresh log upon the fire, resuming his old attitude and keeping his eyes fixed upon the door.

The footsteps ascend the huge stairs, the door opens, and the companion of this lad's life enters.

He is a tall, handsome-looking man, with no resemblance to the lad, save perhaps in the eyes, though, dark and piercing as the lad's are, the man's are blacker and more piercing still.

As he enters, closing the door carefully after him and shooting, with a familiar action, a long bolt into its socket, the boy rises, and, displaying a weird yet not ungraceful gait, approaches to help him remove the long dark cloak that is wrapped closely round his thin, lithe figure.

The man acknowledges the action and nod with a short laugh, that is more an exclamation of greeting than mirth.

"Well, Oli!" he says, in a voice that is not unmusical. "Well, lad, all right, Leese. Cloak wet? Throw it across the chair! Heyho, I am tired—fagged's more the word—to death."

And with a lifting of his dark eyebrows and a pursing of his full, expressive mouth, he sinks into the chair which the lad, still silently, drags—it is too heavy to lift—toward the fire.

"What a blaze. Art cold, Oli? Your young blood should scarce own to that though. I suppose you find it chilly to be doing nothing but thinking; while I am hot—hot, lad—with work, and thinking too, for the matter of that."

This, uttered in the tone of a soliloquy, with the black eyes fixed upon the fire and a pair of long, slender hands fumbling about his head, does not require an answer, and Oli, as the man calls him, still dumb, stands beside his empty chair and waits.

The fumbling brings about a strange result, for with an impatient exclamation the man lifts what seems to be almost the upper part of his head—but which is in reality a wig and false forehead—and with his eyes still upon the fire hands the disguise to the lad.

He takes it with an air of one long accustomed to the task and, crossing the room to the old cabinet, deposits it within one of its cavernous drawers. Then he returns and, dumb still, proceeds to light a handsome but faded lamp and spread a cloth upon the table.

The bright flame of the lamp awakens the man—who seen by its light is altered by the removal of his wig, having golden hair and a fair complexion that go strangely with his dark eyes—for he rises and, with a long-drawn "Heyho," helps the boy lay out the cold joint, moid, bread, butter, cheese and a bottle of wine that are to serve for supper.

Then, all the preparations complete, the strange two seat themselves at either end of the massive table.

"Cold beef?" remarks the man. "This is a luxury, Oli, luxury—you and I have fared worse, eh?"

And he nods, but without the smile that should accompany the congratulation.

"Ay," replies the lad, speaking for the first time and in a voice as peculiar as the man's, but a hundred-fold more musical. "Ay," he continues, "and I suppose may do so again."

"You are right," returns the man, cutting a slice of the beef and handing it to him. "To-day lies in our hands, to-morrow in the gods'. That is a Roman proverb; Oli, but unlike some of the same family—true: To-day is ours, to-morrow is the gods'. You do not ask me how the day has gone?"

Oli shrugs his shoulders—a gesture peculiarly unnatural to one so young—unnatural but not ungraceful.

"I am not impatient, Melchior; no great fortune or thou wouldst have been more cheerful and have sighed less."

This speech was as shrewdly unnatural as the gesture, peculiar too by the introduction of the "thou," which, it will be noted, both man and boy used at times and in an odd and irregular manner.

"True," replies Melchior, "no great things, Oli. But the seed is sown let us hope, the seed is sown; you can't get the harvest without sowing, remember that, lad. Sow, harrow and watch and the harvest is sure—though may be long delayed."

The lad nods.

"And where hast thou been sowing to-day?"

"In the field of fools," replied Melchior, curtly; "a large tract of land to cover, and a fruitful one. And you, lad, what hast thou done?"

"All that you set me," said the youth, his face lit up with a passing gleam of interest.

"That's well; I'll look at it after supper—give me the corkscrew. To-day is ours, and if we use it well, to-morrow may be plucked from the gods—eh, Oli?"

The lad nodded again to show that he understood. The man uncorked the bottle and poured out a glass of the contents with great care.

"Rare Radersheim, Oli. One of the last few bottles. Ah, old wine, you and I have seen some strange things. Here's to thy death and burial!"

And with a gesture grotesque and weird he raised the glass high above his head, then set it to his lips and drained it.

"So, the tasks are done, Oli?" he resumed, leaning back in his chair and wiping his lips. "The history and the geography, the French and the Italian, all done, eh?"

Oli nodded.

"That's well. Knowledge is power. Some say it is not, Oli; they are idiots. Knowledge—not learning, mark you!—is power infinite, immeasurable. Know man and you rule him. Know him not and he rules you. Man is divided—"

"Into two classes," said the boy, taking up the sentence in obedience to a questioning upraising of his master's eyebrows, and speaking in a rapid, meditative yet eager tone, and with dreamy eyes. "Into two classes—fools and knaves, slaves and owners, poor and rich."

The man filled his glass and nodded approvingly.

"Good! Go on, Oli, go on."

"The fools were created for the knaves, the slaves for their masters, the poor for the rich. Knowledge rules them all. Know man and rule him."

"Good! Well repeated, Oli. Grave that lesson on your heart, while you have one; while you are fortunate enough to be able to live without it burn it into your mind, burn it in. Knaves, fools, rich and poor. Knowledge of man above them all. Heigho! Now, Oli, your glass of brave old Radersheim and then to work."

The lad rose from the table and shook his head.

"No wine to-night, Melchior," he said, gathering together the remains of the meal.

The man nodded.

"Then we'll put the bottle by; Radersheim is not to go begging, lad. Time, which teaches all things if men will but learn, will teach thee to accept all offers while fools live to make them."

Rising as he spoke, he carried the bottle to the cabinet and placed it tenderly within it.

Then he walked to the door, examined its fastenings, which were elaborate and seemingly unnecessarily massive, and stood by the fire waiting till the lad had finished clearing the table.

When Oli had folded the cloth he said:

"I am ready, Melchior."

And taking up the lamp he proceeded to the end of the room shrouded by the curtain.

The man followed, and the two passed behind its massive folds into the remaining portion of the room.

It was empty and unfurnished and seemed to serve as the store-room for old packing-cases and hampers, several of which were lying about the floor and resting against the wall.

Setting the lamp upon the ground, the lad removed one of these packing-cases from the wall and commenced passing his fingers along the worm-eaten planks.

In a few moments his practised fingers found the cunningly hidden spring and a slight grating noise was heard as the panel slid slowly into the wall.

Taking up the lamp, the lad stood aside and the man passed through, leaving the boy to fasten the door and follow him.

The rays of the lamp held up above their heads served to light them on their way down a long flight of twisting circular stone steps into a large cellar.

Here the atmosphere, instead of being damp and humid as might have been expected, was dry and hot.

A turn of the passages revealed the cause, a small compact furnace which threw from its red-hot heart a fierce circle of heat.

The fire had been lighted some hours and the iron door was glowing and red.

By some contrivance the smoke was consumed or carried off by complicated funnels and cunningly contrived ventilation.

Beside the furnace the cellar contained a number of smelting-pots, crucibles, testing glasses, bottles and jars of chemicals, dyes used by metal workers, and a beautifully contrived machine for stamping coin.

In one corner, concealed by a screen, lay a mass of metals—iron, lead, copper and zinc.

In another a set of appliances for working the smelting-pot and manufacturing the fused metals.

With a methodical air the two strange beings proceeded to remove their coats and shirts and encase themselves in masks and plates of iron to shield them from the fierce heat of the furnace.

Then the man, approaching the smelting-pot, poured in the lumps of metal which the boy supplied him with, and so silent and unwrapped they worked, ever feeding the hungry, hissing vessel and stirring its contents, the crimson glow of the fire flashing upon their hideous iron armour, and transforming them from human beings into the likeness of demons.

For several hours they toiled on, silent all through save for some passing remark by the man on the temperature of the furnace or the progress of the smelting.

Then when a sufficient quantity of the metal was melted they poured it into various moulds, and the two carried them into an adjoining compartment for the next process.

Here they rested awhile and divested themselves of their iron fire-guards, Oli seating himself upon a block of wood, and relapsing into the old attitude of dreamy, unworldly meditation which had settled upon him as a habit.

But a word from Melchior roused him, and with a steady he helped him arrange the metal upon the machine ready for receiving the stroke of the die.

As silently as before but with greater attention and a look of stern earnestness and anxiety, the man worked on, scrutinising each glittering coin as it fell from the machine and passing it critically between his finger and thumb.

Some coins he flung aside with an impatient exclamation to be remelted; others he laid on a slab, nodding approvingly.

Click, click sounded the machine, tinkle, tinkle the coins as they fell from it.

Suddenly the great bell of St. Paul's gave out the hour twelve.

"Work's done, Oli!" exclaimed the man, raising himself and straightening his back. "Punctuality is the soul of business."

The youth, who had been feeling the machine, dropped the handle by which it was worked, and stood with his hands clasped behind him, gazing fixedly at the glittering pile of coins before him.

"See!" exclaimed Melchior, taking one up and holding it before him with a sardonic smile. "As beautiful, as neat, as precise, as artistic as we could wish. Who dare say that our friends at the Mint can produce a better? Look you, Oli, how absurd, how fictitious the value they set upon their precious manufacture. Money! What is money but a base delusion when you and I, lad, can make it for ourselves!"

And he laughed a strange, mocking laugh.

"Men kill each other, sell their souls, their lives, their bodies for money. Fools all, Oli. We, who cannot more than the rest of humanity exist without it, make it for ourselves."

And he flung the coin upon the steel table with a flourish of his arm.

"If rings well," he mused. "It would puzzle some of them if a genuine sovereign were placed beside it to pick out the impostor. Bah! It comes from the same source, Oli, mother earth, and is closely related. That pretty piece of fiction is the brother of the genuine coin for which men do and suffer so much. There, look up, lad, and see to the furnace while I pack them up. It's bedtime and I'm fagged to death."

Oli did as he was bid, and the two ascended the winding stone stairs and reached the upper rooms.

Here Melchior proceeded to count over the counterfeit coin, and, making a memorandum in a small book with the methodical regularity of a banker's clerk, said:

"One hundred pounds, Oli. Not bad for a night's work. Patience, lad, and we shall soon sit on the seat of the rich and scornful. Oh, money, money!" he added, rising and pacing the floor. "But there, no moralising. You are as white as a ghost, and as mournful; get to bed, lad, get to bed."

"But the lessons?" asked Oli, raising his head upon his hands and fixing his dark eyes upon his companion.

"They must wait. It is past midnight, and I must rise early. Run them over again to-morrow and we'll

go over them in the evening. Money and knowledge. Cli. There, good night."

The lad lit a small lamp, and with a weary step passed behind the curtain, whence his footsteps died gradually away.

The man Melchior sank into the chair and bent his eyes upon the ground.

"Poor lad! Bah! why should I pity him? He is well fed, clothed, and will share the wages if he shares the work. Yet, yet his life is hard—strange—joyless! Bah! Why should I play the pitiful? Who thought of me when I was his age, who cared if I lived in a very gutter or died, was fed or starved? Where did I learn mercy or pity? Not from the world, surely, not from the iron hearts of men. Mercy! Pity! they are greater counterfeits than even these shams," and he struck the bag of coins with his strong yet shapely hand. "Let me remember rather the cruelty, the rapacity of the human wolf and work on, scheme still that I may, fight him on his own ground."

He rose here and took to pacing the old oak floor with restless yet tigerly silent tread, and with a heavier, more thoughtful frown, mused on.

"But this is slow, too slow for my restless, impatient spirit. What is a hundred pounds when the labour, the hard, terrible labour, is considered? Some quicker way must be found. In these hundred pounds lie a hundred chances of detection; one base coin may fail and all is lost. Now, if this magic morsel could be copied! Ah!"

And he took from his pocket-book a crisp fifty-pound note, and gazed at it with a long breath and fiery, yet calculating eyes.

"As well hang for a sheep as a lamb. 'Tis your pitiful, paltry flier of a loaf of bread, your miserable coward, with a single murder, who pays the penalty—your bank director, fraudulent, City thief, your wholesome butcher, who, with the credentials of a general, sends a thousand mortals to their last account who gets the reward. By Heaven, I'll try it!"

And with a gesture of resolution that was almost one of defiance he thrust the bank note into his pocket again, and catching up the lamp from the table disappeared with his bag of coins behind the curtain.

CHAPTER II.

Virtuous and vicious every man must be,
Few in the extreme but all in the degree.

Pope.

If the man Melchior's eyes looked sharp and piercing by the dim gleams of the lamp and the furnace fire they looked still sharper and more dazzling in the bright light of the morning.

As the City clocks chimed the hour of six he started awake and leapt from his small bed, which consisted of no luxurious spring mattress and unhealthy feathers, but a hard, unyielding cushion, stuffed with straw and covered with a single sheet and a thick, serviceable rug, soft in summer, warm in winter.

The room was furnished in a correspondingly plain style. One unpainted deal table, a wooden settee in place of a chair, a large, old-fashioned, and elaborately carved wardrobe, a remnant of the fashionable appurtenances of past days, and a shelf, upon which stood a cannie of water, powder flasks, shot belts, and several bottles, seemingly containing chemicals, for their stoppers were of peculiar formation, and could only be withdrawn by using a secret twist of the finger and thumb.

Over the shelf hung a first-class rifle, a pair of glittering rapiers of Spanish make, and a poignard dating from the same country.

On the table and within arm's reach of the bed lay a revolver—loaded, possibly, cocked certainly.

This strange being, in addition to a thousand and one accomplishments, possessed the power or knack of waking at any time he pleased.

Six was his habitual rising time, and the clocks were not truer in their proclamation of the hour than he in springing from his hard, health-giving bed.

None looking at him as he stood before the large swinging glass, and noticing his well-cut features, bright, commanding eyes, and unflinching lip, would guess or readily believe him to be the same man who stood, cased in iron, and bathed in perspiration, before the smelting-pot but a few hours before.

His hand as he raised it to shave his well-moulded but massive chin was as firm as the razor within it; his voice as he muttered, or rather murmured, for the half-spoken muttering was free from ill-humour or dissatisfaction, was clear and freshly musical.

It is impossible to describe such a man; to say that he was fearless as a lion, keen of eye as a hawk, unscrupulous as a fiend, pitiless as an Oriental despot, and without possession of an infinite grace and witchery of speech is to say much, yet little.

Better to let the reader learn the man for himself. His toilet completed—a simple yet careful one, scrupulously neat, and in the fashion, but finished with that master touch that implies careless indifference yet pleasing completeness—he took up the revolver, unbolted and unbarred the thick oaken door of his room, and, humming a light and buoyant air, ran lightly down the broad stairs.

On the first landing he paused, and pushing open a door entered a room.

It was spacious and lofty, with frescoed ceiling and characteristic carving, but empty.

At the farther end, however, a pistol target was fixed upon the wall, and opposite this, measuring a distance with careful exactness, Melchior placed himself.

With seemingly indifferent and languid manner he fired several shots at the bullseye and succeeded in hitting it three times out of every four.

With a nod of satisfaction he strolled across the room to a cupboard and dragged from it the straw effigy of a man.

It was dressed if not with the preciseness of a living figure at least with all the proper outward garments and looked grotesquely ridiculous, or hideously appalling, stuck up against the wall, its fixed, staring eyes gazing into vacancy.

With a smile and nod of recognition and a sardonic "Good morning!" Melchior took up his position and aimed at his heart, over which there were already several bullet marks.

Three consecutive times the morsel of lead cleared the mark, then, murmured:

"Change is pleasing, monsieur; suppose one tries your elegant nose!"

He took aim and split into a thousand fragments the wooden feature.

"Soh!" he cried, softly, with a light laugh. "There goes your beauty, my friend. A man looks strange without a nose; something is wanted to complete the study. There goes an eye! Now the other! Two teeth! and—as a parting salute—the right ear! There, monsieur, enough is as good as a feast, and although you are tempting time's up."

The clock struck seven.

"There, go back into the hospital."

And with a mock politeness he placed the battered man-target in its hiding-place and proceeded to sweep up the sawdust with a small broom, murmuring, pleasantly:

"What a pity it is men do not adopt this harmless ballast instead of the disagreeable liquid they patronize. Sawdust is as pretty, and so much more convenient!"

At that instant a tap came at the door.

"Hem! Punctuality is not one of Cli's virtues. Two minutes late, lad, by my watch." And he tapped his breast with upraised eyebrows. "Two minutes are a life sometimes, Cli. A reprieve that comes two minutes behind is as good as an eternity too late."

The lad neither hung his head nor showed other sign of contrition, but with his dark, questioning eyes fixed upon the speaker's face waited for farther precept or command.

"Go fetch the sword," said Melchior, throwing off his coat and baring his muscular, perfectly formed arms to the shoulder.

The youth took a pair of foils and face guards from the cupboard, and handing one set to Melchior invested himself in the other wire mask, and stood in an attitude of readiness with his foil in the first position.

"Garde!" cried Melchior, musically.

And the mimic duel commenced.

The man was as admirable a fencer as he was marksman.

His glittering but harmless weapon glided, trembled, slid, and went through every possible movement with the speed and graceful ease of a snake.

No mean opponent was the lad either.

At the first click of the long, lithe steel his eyes lost their dreamy look and brightened with a sudden fire that grew intense as the man pressed him close, and extended to his late pale cheeks, which were tinged with a peach-like bloom, and gave to his face the only thing needed to render it beautiful and youth like.

After a long struggle, evidently prolonged by the master for the purpose of encouraging and stimulating the pupil, the youth received the thrust, and in an instant lowered the point of his foil in token of surrender.

The man stood looking at his flushed face and still sparkling eyes with an expression of profound satisfaction and mingled speculation.

"Splendid!" he exclaimed, as the youth came forward and took his foil and mask. "Splendid, Cli. By Heavens! you will be a great wrist at the rapier—supple, strong and quick. Lad, life cannot be anything but bright to a man who can play his weapon as you shall do. Look at me, lad," he continued, stopping for a moment in donning his coat,

and raising his hand above his head impressively. "Had you learnt nothing else from me, your master, during these years of solitude you would be well repaid."

He seemed to have broken through some rule in thus speaking, for the lad's face lit up strangely and he made a gesture half of entreaty, half of defiance, while these words dropped from, rather than were spoken by his suddenly quivering lips:

"Melchior, tell me—"

The man turned to him with a cold and chilling glance.

"Tell you what, Cli? that I am hungry? Well, then, I confess it. To breakfast!"

Sinking back in an instant into the old expression, Cli led the way into the lower room, which served as a living apartment for the strange pair.

Here a plain but sufficient breakfast was laid; an old woman, who if not dumb thoroughly appeared so, waited to lift the coffee from the fire.

After she had placed it on the table she glanced with small, dark eyes at her master and receiving a dismissive nod silently left the room.

With an appetite rendered sharp by exercise, Melchior partook of the broiled bacon and huge slices of bread with a relish that was just perceptible through the tone of good breeding which characterized even his insignificant actions.

The youth ate as slowly and with a methodical air that showed for him the food had no charms and that he ate, as Cicero did, to live.

Presently after a long silence he lifted his eyes and took in the dress of his companion at a glance.

"You wear no wig to-day," he said, in his low, musical and slightly monotonous voice.

"No, to-day I am nature itself. With me that is the most perfect disguise, Cli. Other men—shall I say knaves, as a distinction?—find it necessary to call art to their aid when they apply themselves to fool catching. I am so thoroughly art at all times that I need only divest myself of it and appear clothed in my natural self to obtain my end. Mark that, Cli! Let a man be so thoroughly on guard that his own weapon may not slice him. Pour me another cup of coffee. To-day I finish the task commenced last night; perhaps I may begin unwinding another skin. I know not, for we are the children of Chance, and must follow whither she leads us."

The youth nodded. He was too used to this form of explanation to be puzzled.

"And now I think of it, Cli, it strikes me that you are a trifle—only a trifle—paler this morning. Surely the work was not too much last night? We commenced later than usual and left off at the moment; perhaps you have not had a good rest."

"I am not tired," said the youth, without raising his eyes.

"Then you look it, which is worse," retorted the master, affably. "Don't get the credit for a weakness you do not possess, Cli. Drink up the coffee and get my cloak—the light one—and come with me this morning. Nature has two great restorers, sleep and air; if one fails, then, Cli, only idiots would refrain from trying the other."

The youth rose and attired himself as desired; he looked thin, but not ungraceful, and his companion's eye passed over him with not unfavourable criticism.

"A little too thin, a trifle too pale," he murmured, then, taking up a richly mounted cane, he led the way to the secret panel.

Through this they passed into the cellar and thence by a subterranean passage into an old rickety house hidden away in one of the dark courts out in the main thoroughfare.

After looking carefully up and down through the slightly opened door to see that the coast was clear the master, followed by his pupil, passed into the street.

As they dropped into the living stream Melchior called the attention of the youth to some article displayed in a shop window by the exclamation:

"Look here, Ralph!"

A lady passing at that moment half stopped and shot a glance of meaning at the speaker, who with a polished air lifted his hat, and as if apologizing for jostling against her murmured, humbly:

"A thousand pardons, madam; my brother was unfortunate enough to push against you."

The quick ears of the lad caught the subtle emphasis on the words "Ralph" and "brother," and with a reluctant nod accompanied by a smothered sigh indicated that he had caught the watch word "Ralph" and the relationship which he was to assume.

CHAPTER III.

Early, light, transient, chaste as early dew.

She sparkled.

Young.

"One half the world," says a famous epigram maker, "does not know how the other half lives."

And he is right; for what should noisy, crowded, ever-bustling Spitalfields know of stately, majestic and beautiful Rivershall, a noble old pile, dusky with Elizabethan bricks, moss-grown with aristocratic traditions?

Rivershall, standing proudly in the midst of its parks and meadows and smiling from its latticed windows at sweet Thames gliding beyond its oaks.

Rivershall, touched by the wand of the Queen Fairy Nature and rendered beautiful without, and helped by her foster-sister Art, made magnificent within. From cellar to garret, saloon to dining-room, resplendent with the luxury of wealth and prosperity. In the last-mentioned apartment, a few days prior to the opening of our story, sat the master of the house, a white-haired old man, with the characteristics of a gentleman speaking plainly from figure, features and bearing.

The large and lofty room was lit with a dozen wax candles upheld by bronze statuettes, a good fire flared in the glittering steel grate and the massive plate that adorned the dinner-table was reflected fourfold in the tall pier-glasses with which each wall was decorated.

Sir Ralph Melville was dining alone, as was his wont, but the same state and formality were observed as when the huge table was surrounded by distinguished guests.

The last course had been removed untouched, and Turner, the butler, white of hair and almost as aristocratic as his master, stood with the cool bottle of old port ready to hand.

Sir Ralph was of the old school in dress and habits.

He held with quiet but unyielding tenacity to the mannerism of his father.

Ruffles to his shirt-front and at his white slender wrists; a well-fitting dress-coat with its plain brass buttons and loose open sleeves; no jewellery save the priceless black pearls at his wrists and the heavy bunch of seals depending from his fob.

Such was his attire, and though old-fashioned it well suited the rather stern but thoroughly aristocratic face, which, lit up by the dark eyes that would have been almost too darkly piercing but for the heavy overshadowing brows, proclaimed to the most careless glance the blue blood flowing within his veins.

Sir Ralph was called a reserved man, his enemies—and no man is without them—went farther, and styled him proud.

But his tenants and the poor round Rivershall mingled no little love with their respect and fear, and no honest voice could be found to call him a tyrannical master or hard landlord.

The fact was his face was against him. It was too handsomely well bred and haughty to find favour with the critical, who saw only the outward man in his commerce with the world, and judged him only by such half-knowledge.

Few had known the dark eyes to grow loving and tender, the thin, perfectly cut lips to unbend and smile.

To the world Sir Ralph Rivershall was a stern, taciturn and reserved man; to the one beloved creature who bore his name he was all that was tender, loving and gentle.

So much for an introduction.

"Turner, this wine is going off, surely the cellar is not damp?"

"Oh, indeed, no, Sir Ralph," replied the old man, horrified at the bare suggestion. "As dry as a bone. This is the old wine, sir, from the right end corner, and when I last tasted it was perfectly fit."

"It is off now," said the baronet, quietly. "Have the goodness to lay it aside."

The old man murmured an acquiescence, and, with a troubled air, was about to leave the room for some of another vintage.

But Sir Ralph called him back.

"No more to-night, Turner. Please wheel the chair to the fire."

The butler noiselessly pushed a comfortable chair in front of the fire, placed a screen beside it, and, leaving the bottle at his master's elbow, left the room.

Sir Ralph, with one arm leaning on the velvet of the chair, sat for a few minutes regarding the fire and seemingly lost in a reverie, from which he was aroused by a gentle tap at the door and the announcement by a footman that Mr. Packer had arrived.

"Tell Mr. Packer that if he is not too tired I should like to see him to-night," said Sir Ralph.

And the footman, stepping aside, made room for the entrance of a thin, middle-aged gentleman, dressed in sober black.

"Good evening, sir," he said, in a soft, deferential voice. "I have ventured to disturb you, but I hope not before you have finished dining."

"Good evening, Mr. Packer," said Sir Ralph, ris-

ing and holding out his white right hand. "No, I have finished some minutes since. James, a chair."

The chair was placed, the lawyer dropped into it and the footman noiselessly retired.

"Have you dined?" asked the baronet, kindly.

"Yes, I thank you, Sir Ralph, and excellently. I broke the journey at the Cross Hills and partook of a capital dinner at the inn."

Sir Ralph rang the bell.

"Turner, some port for Mr. Packer; you know the bin. I think you like the '28,' Packer?"

"I thank you, Sir Ralph. The '28' is my favourite, I confess."

This question and reply, which were the stereotyped ones and always used, being disposed of the lawyer, with his self-composed and delicately respectful air, commenced his business.

"You sent for me, Sir Ralph, I presume, on the matter of the timber?"

Sir Ralph nodded.

"I did," he said, "my note said so I think. Have you decided the point I put to you?"

"Yes," said Mr. Packer, "yes, I have; I have given it much consideration, and I think I may say that I have. Thank you, this is beautiful wine, and I drink to your good health, Sir Ralph."

The baronet bowed in response to the courtesy.

"And what is your conclusion?" he asked.

"That you have not the right," said the lawyer.

The baronet's forehead wrinkled and darkened, and his small foot tapped the polished floor impatiently.

"Not the right!" he repeated. "Surely—but there you must know. What are the terms of the will?"

The lawyer, with unmoved face, drew a long parchment from his pocket.

"No, no," interrupted the baronet. "For Heaven's sake, don't read me the entire clauses! Tell me in your own words and as simply as you can."

"The will of your deceased brother, the late Sir William, bequeathed Rivershall to you in default of male issue to himself. He had male issue, as we know, but—"

Sir Ralph stopped him.

"Enough! enough!" he said. "Pray don't touch upon that question."

The lawyer bowed submissively.

"Rivershall descended to you and to your male issue, but in default of issue it reverts, after the holder's death, to Lady Melville."

Again the brow darkened.

"Pray put it plainer, or I shall fail to understand you," he said, sternly.

The lawyer, quiet as ever, but desperate, explained:

"As it stands, Sir Ralph, your brother's widow receives ten thousand a year from the estate, and if anything should happen to you or to Miss Lily she would take the estate itself."

"I know that," said the baronet, tapping the floor more quickly, and raising his glass to hide the tremor upon his lips. "But what of the timber?"

"I am coming to it, Sir Ralph. Owing to Lady Melville's claim, you are deterred from touching the timber, the house, or the land, and are really but a life tenant in effect and purpose."

Sir Ralph set his glass down with a sharp exclamation.

"Shameful!" he said, sternly. "It is a disgrace to our very name."

"But," continued the lawyer, smoothly, apparently not noticing his client's emotion, "terms might be come to with her ladyship, who is now in town."

The rolling back of the easy-chair, and the proud uprisal of its late occupant stopped him.

"Mr. Packer," was the low, muttered answer dropped sternly from the thin, hard lips, "surely I misunderstand you! Make terms with Lady Melville! You wrong yourself by the suggestion. Make terms with the woman who wrought my poor brother and my child such injury! Sir, I would rather see Rivershall in flames and the timber floating down a floodway than speak, nay, think of such dishonour."

Before the lawyer could attempt to stem the slow and fearfully quiet flow of haughty indignation the door was opened by a hasty hand, and a beautiful girl of fourteen ran toward Sir Ralph, crying, with the tremulous accents of child-love:

"Oh, papa, how long you have been! I have waited till I could stay no longer. I knew you had finished because I saw Turner leave the room. I watched him over the balustrade."

A whisper from the baronet stopped the musical voice and caused her to turn to the old lawyer, who had been watching with unmoved face, but anything but unmoved heart, the change which the girl's entrance had made upon the old man's face. It had melted as it were before the beauty of her angelic presence and sweet, love-filled eyes. His very form had dropped from its straight, upraised attitude beneath the magic of her touch.

It was a transformation, and Mr. Packer could scarcely believe that the gentle face bending over the golden head nestling against the frilled shirt was the same one which had so sternly regarded him a moment ago.

"Look, Lily—Mr. Packer," Sir Ralph had murmured, and the girl, breaking off, turned, with a fairy-like grace and a sweet smile, to hold out her hand, saying, quickly, with a childlike blush of candour:

"Forgive me, Mr. Packer. I only saw papa. Are you very well?"

"Very well, my dear Miss Lily," replied the lawyer, bending over the tiny, soft hand with an air of positive reverence. "You must blame me, poor old Packer, as you used to call me one time, not very long ago either, for keeping Sir Ralph from you. I was always a nuisance and a trouble, but Sir Ralph will not want me again to-night, so I will go," and, with as near an approach to a smile as his dry old face could manage, he bestowed a respectful bow upon the baronet, received a kindly one in return, and left the room.

Still keeping his hand and nestling against his heart, the girl led Sir Ralph to his chair, seating herself at his feet upon an embroidered stool and looking up into his face with wistful, loving gaze.

"Oh, naughty papa!" she murmured. "Who was it promised me that he would not see that poor, wicked old Packer again for a long, long time?—who? Tell me."

"I—I, my child," replied Sir Ralph, stroking her golden hair with a caressing and almost pleading hand.

"And you promised!" she whispered, reproachfully. "See now how wrong it is. Why do you not let him do as he likes, and let us live, dear, dear papa, all to ourselves?"

Sir Ralph sighed.

"Lily, my darling," he said, "you talk—you know nothing about the little troubles and have—"

She stopped him by rising and drawing his head to her bosom and holding it there, while her eyes filled with tears.

"Troubles, papa, and keep them from me! Oh, tell me this moment all, every one of them. Oh, papa, you promised me you would never grow angry and cross again, you promised me when you kissed me last night you would never, never let Packer worry you or make you unhappy! Papa, I heard you speak to-night quite angrily. I heard you say some one's name—Lady Melville's."

Sir Ralph started, and drew his head away so that his face was turned from her.

She slid down to his knees and taking his hands between hers kissed them passionately.

"I heard you call her 'woman,' papa, so sternly and harshly. Tell me, who is she? Mrs. Lane once said she thought Lady Melville was my aunt."

"Hush, hush, my dear," said Sir Ralph, rising and pacing the room. "I—I cannot bear to hear her name upon your lips. Never, yes, never mention it again!"

(To be continued.)

THE advantage of living does not consist in length of days, but in the right improvement of them. As many days as we pass without doing some good are so many days lost.

ON the 1st of January there were 60,484 lunatics in England and Wales. As the whole population of England and Wales at the last census was under twenty-two millions and three-quarters, the result plainly is that out of every 375 English and Welsh men, women, and children, one, at the lowest computation, is insane, and under treatment as a lunatic.

THE service of plate to be given to the members of the Geneva Court of Arbitration will cost us 3,711. Sir Alexander Cockburn refuses remuneration, even in this form, and each of the three foreign arbitrators will therefore have a service of plate worth about 1,200 guineas. America will make them a similar gift.

THE increase in the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows (it is stated on good authority) has been, during the past year, upwards of 11,000, and the Foresters, during the same period, have added upwards of 25,000 members to their muster roll. The combined strength of these two great affiliated societies at present exceeds 900,000 financial members.

ENGLISH ACTORS IN FRANCE.—The English company now playing "Hamlet" in Paris do not seem to have the same good fortune as usually attends their French brethren in London. In the first place Paris is torridly hot, almost completely deserted, and in the second the theatre, the Athénée, is absurdly small, so that *Figaro*, who declares that all the actors are Horse Guards in size, compares the players to "whales in the aquarium of the Jardin d'Acclimatation." On the whole, however, the criticisms are not unkind.



[MR. RIGHT AT LAST.]

THE FATAL RESEMBLANCE.

By the Author of "Lord Dane's Error," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

Shakespeare.

VERY pleasant did the old Linden Farm homestead look on the sunny summer evening of which I am writing, and very fair was the face of the young girl who stood at the hall door, shading her eyes with her hand, and looking far out across the fields, to see if the hay carts were turning down the narrow lane, whose long-branched trees snatched eagerly at their fragrant burden as they passed beneath them.

Frances Roxton was the only daughter of the master of the Linden Farm. A brother, two years her senior, had died in early boyhood, leaving her the sole representative of the family name and the sole heiress of the broad acres and green woodlands which made up the compact little family estate.

From father to son the Linden Farm had descended for many a generation, and John Roxton was almost inclined to murmur, when he stood beside the grave of his boy, and reflected that now, for the first time, the order of things was to be changed—changed in his day, though by no fault of his.

But the baby girl prattling in her cradle or on his knee found her way to the bereaved heart of the father, and in due time became all, and more than all to him, that the dead boy could have been. He contented himself with drawing up a will, in which, after due provision had been made for his wife, all his real and personal estate was bequeathed to this daughter, on condition that she always bore the name of Roxton, even after her marriage. It would not be very difficult to find some smart young farmer willing to comply with this stipulation, for the sake of the pretty wife and the handsome property he would gain thereby, the old man thought, with a triumphant chuckle, as he affixed his signature to the deed.

And, to tell the truth, many a suitor had already professed his willingness to change his name for the sake of so fair and gentle a bride. But Frances, though not proud or haughty, seemed hard to please, as indeed befitted so lovely an heiress—and this was her eighteenth birthday and neither hand nor heart was plighted yet.

There was no hurry, the farmer often said. She had a good home, and plenty of new dresses, and books, and anything else she took a fancy to, and one of these days "Mr. Right" would come along, and

all would be well. But Frances only laughed and shook her head at such speeches. She was contented and happy in her pleasant home. She had no wish to change—no desire even to see "Mr. Right," whoever he might be.

But on this evening, when she was watching only for her father's return from the field—without a thought of any other person in her head or heart—"Mr. Right" came walking slowly across the level lawn, and halted at a little distance from the door.

For more than half an hour "Mr. Right" had been sitting on the stile beside the hedge that separated the Linden Farm from the high road, lazily admiring the peaceful beauty and tranquillity of the scene. He had been walking far that day—his clothes were covered with dust, and he was both tired and hungry. Yet he seemed to forget all this, and he leaned his elbow on his knee and his cheek upon his hand, and gazed at the broad, fragrant fields, resounding with the voices of labourers and the creaking of loaded harvest waggons. From the fields his eyes went down the long green lane that led toward the farmhouse. The lane, it is true, was but a deep gully between two high banks. But the sides of those banks were a perfect mass of wild flowers of every shade and hue and the trees that grew at the top leaned over and interlaced their branches with a friendly clasp that formed an avenue of cool, green, flickering light and shade below.

At the end, where the lane grew wider, and the trees ceased to arch, stood the house—a great clumsy, old-fashioned, square building of deep red brick, its many doors and windows set heavily in white stone facings, like the old manor-houses of the time of George the Second. In fact the Linden Farm had once been a gentleman's seat, and there were armorial bearings painted in the square hall that had never belonged to the Roxtons, who were a hardy race of yeomen from the very first. The Linden Farm had once been "Hyldred Hall, and to the time of its erection belonged the massive entrances, the stately guest-chambers, and the great keeping-rooms below.

The farm buildings, covered with moss and lichen, and the great farmyard at one side, all alive with "white horns tossing over the wall," contrasted oddly enough with the manor-house itself; but odd contrasts are sometimes very beautiful and agreeable, and the young man, who had the eye of an artist and the soul of a poet, humble though his exterior might be, felt no inclination to quarrel with the aspect of the place.

And when it was suddenly brightened and improved by the vision of Frances Roxton, with her

fluttering blue dress and white apron, and the blue ribbons in her hair, he must have been all unlike other young men at twenty-five years of age if he could have found aught else to wish for in the scene on which he gazed.

Frances Roxton was tall, and somewhat slenderly formed, as became her eighteen summers. The delicate oval of her cheek melted exquisitely into a dimpled chin and a slender, swanlike throat; her complexion was dark, but very clear, with a dash of bright colour in the lips and cheeks, her abundant black hair was braided in heavy rolls away from the low, wide forehead; and the deep, dark gray eyes were shadowed by lashes so black that the eyes themselves looked black at times. She had a slender waist, a small hand and foot, and, that greatest charm of all, a sweet, low voice, whose bewildering cadence lingered on the listener's ear long after she had ceased to speak.

And Frances Roxton, dropping the hand that shaded her eyes as she heard the stranger's step, saw a tall and elegant young man, who towered above her by the height of head and shoulders, but who was gazing at her with a look of admiration as genuine and sincere as if he had been the veriest school-boy that ever blushed beneath the glance of a pretty maiden's eye.

His forehead was high and broad, his nose aquiline, and his mouth, just shaded by a golden moustache, was as calm and beautiful as that of a sleeping child. His hair hung in golden waves and curls, and his eyes were a soft, bright blue—more pensive than laughing, and half-hidden by long, thick lashes that were much darker than his hair.

A smile, bewilderingly sweet, played about his mouth as he advanced a little nearer, and, lifting the cap he wore, asked permission to sit down and rest in the stone porch for a few minutes.

Frances was a rustic belle of the first magnitude, and it was not often that she lost all self-possession, as she certainly did now.

She blushed, stammered, and, stepping back into the hall, called to her mother, who was superintending the labours of one or two stout servants in the kitchen.

"Mother, will you come here a moment? A gentleman wishes to speak to you!"

Mrs. Roxton came bustling forward at once.

She was a comely, dark little woman, Welsh by birth, and it was plain enough to be seen where Frances got her good looks when mother and daughter stood side by side.

But in the girl's face lingered a deeper, almost a sadder expression than had ever characterized that,

of the woman, though some of life's most earnest joys and sorrows had been her own.

The young man could but notice this difference as he silently compared the two countenances before him.

"I beg pardon for intruding upon you," he said, uncovering his head again, "but I have been walking all day long in the hot sun, and I am so worn out with fatigue that I shall be greatly obliged if you will give me leave to rest awhile in the porch here."

"With pleasure, sir, and if you will but step inside and take a mouthful of supper with us you will be heartily welcome," said the hospitable little dame, "and that will be a great deal better than sitting in the porch, I'm thinking."

The young man smiled. His face in any mood was charming, but when lit up by this kindly smile its beauty was perfectly dazzling, and Mrs. Roston's heart warmed toward him when she saw it.

"Do come in, sir," she said, even more warmly than before. "You look fit to drop with fatigue."

"Thank you. Since you are so kind I cannot refuse."

"That's right. This way, sir, and mind the step. This house is a good one, and if you do not keep always on the watch you are as likely to go headfirst into a room as any other way here, Frances, child, can you see your father coming?"

"No, mother. They are down in the five-acre field yet."

"Then they won't be here for half an hour or more, and we will have a cup of tea quietly together before they come. Run, child, and fetch the china basin and a clean towel—the gentleman will like to wash before tea, perhaps."

Frances sped away to obey her mother's orders instead of sending a servant to wait upon the guest.

There were several round, rosy-cheeked maids in the kitchen, but she preferred waiting upon him herself, though why she could not say.

She brought the painted china basin from the best chamber, with towels and a ball of perfumed soap.

The stranger, standing at the little bench beneath the garden porch, bathed his face and hands in the cool, pure water, brushed his hair, retied his cravat, and freed his clothes from dust, and came in to the evening meal, looking quite a different person from the weary traveller she had seen a few moments before.

The table, spread for the healthy appetites of the farmer and his labourers, was standing in the great kitchen, and the stranger took the seat at the head, which belonged to the master of the house, while Frances poured him out a cup of tea, and Mrs. Roston filled him a tankard of nut-brown ale, which he drained to the very dregs with a long breath of satisfaction.

Having thus made a commencement, he ate and drank heartily, and chatted pleasantly with his hostess the while, but Frances sat in her own place very silent, and trifling with her cup of tea which she had poured out for herself, but did not drink.

A sweet trouble, which she could find no words to explain, had seized hold of her spirit—a trouble which was rather a pleasure than a pain, yet which brought some sadness with it all the while.

She looked ably at the young stranger, now and then, as he was busy with his meals. Who was he? Whence came he, and where could he be going? At the end of his journey was some other young girl, fairer and happier than she, waiting for his coming?

She sighed at the thought, and then felt angry with herself for having done so. What was he to her that she should be speculating about him and his future? What had she to do with that future, or with him either, for that matter?

As she thought this last thought the large, serious blue eyes were fixed full upon her face.

"I have one more favour to beg before I go," said the stranger, without removing his gaze, which made her own eyes droop and her cheek burn hotly.

"What is it?" she faltered.

"Will you go with me into the porch for a little while, and I will sketch the hay-cart when it comes up from the field for you? Then, when you look at that picture in after days, you will sometimes think of me and this pleasant evening, though both shall have passed away from you for ever."

"I will go," she said, in a half-whisper.

She led the way out into the porch, and, taking a small sketch-book from the breast-pocket of his coat, the young man began to draw.

The hay-cart came in sight just as he was giving the last touches to the green lane, and in a few moments it was faithfully depicted upon the paper—the great horses, the labourers gathering round, her father's smiling face and all.

He looked at his work for a moment or two, then tore the leaf from the book and held it toward her. As she took it, his hand closed for a moment on hers.

"You remember the bargain?"

"I do not know what you mean, sir."

"You are never to look at that picture without a thought of me."

"I never will indeed."

"And where will you hang it?"

"In my own room. Father will get a frame for it, and it shall be over my writing-table as long as I live."

"Nay, fair lady—keep it there till you are married. That is all I will ask of you. And on your wedding-day throw it aside and forget me and my picture together."

She looked up at him, and something in his voice, or in the gaze that met her own, sent the red blood again to cheek and brow.

"My wedding-day is far distant," she murmured. "But why need I throw the picture aside when it comes?"

"I have given it to the maiden, not to the wife," was his enigmatical reply.

At that moment Mrs. Roston came bustling out through the hall, and Frances, glad in her embarrassment to change the subject, placed the picture in her hand, but made no mention of the terms on which it had been offered for her acceptance.

"Mercy, child, where did you get this? It is the old fairy lane itself, and the oak and your father. I never saw such a thing in all my born days. Who made it for you?"

"The gentleman, mother."

"You?" And the good soul glanced in fresh surprise at the young artist. "Now is it possible that you can make such pictures as that all out of your own head, as one may say?"

"Such as they are, I am able to paint pictures as well as sketch them," was the modest reply.

"Is it your business, sir, may I make so bold as to ask?"

He hesitated for a moment only, and then said: "For the present it is, madam."

"And you can paint portraits—I mean copy them?"

"I think I can."

Then little dame's face glowed with delight. "Oh, then, sir, if you would only stop with us for awhile and paint a picture of my boy that is dead, sir. We have one of him, but it was badly done, but the colours are fading, and in a few years the face will be quite gone. Do you think you can spare time to do this, sir?"

He looked at Frances. "Her dark grey eyes, all alive with feeling, were fixed upon his face, and her lips were parted as if in mute inquiry as to the answer he would make to her mother's request."

"Yes," he said, drawing a long breath; "I can spare the time, and if I can paint the picture so as to satisfy you, I shall be very happy to do so, and shall charge you nothing beyond my board and lodging while I stay."

"Oh, sir, it's not the money; thank Heaven I've are able to pay you for your trouble, and we shall be very glad to do it. My heart has ached every time I have looked at that portrait lately, for fear lest I should lose all that I have left of my poor Charley. Will you step this way, sir, and I will show you his picture?"

She opened a door to the right of the hall as she spoke, and led the way into a square, old-fashioned "keeping-room," where antique furniture and valuable old china and silver, which should go down as heirlooms through the family, kept each other company in stately silence and solitude.

In one corner, with a ray of light falling on it from the "heart" cut in the opposite shutter, hung the picture of the dead boy.

Frances opened the window, and the full, soft light of sunset bathed it in a glory and a radiance that made it seem scarcely a thing of earth.

It was a poorly-executed painting.

The soul of the artist had conceived what his hand was too feeble to depict, and thus, though the attitude was perfect, the expression was weak, and the colours roughly and badly laid on.

A little fair-headed, pale-faced, delicate-looking lad of about eight summers was lying back in a great arm-chair, his hands clasped idly in his lap, his face turned toward the spectators, and his full blue eyes gazing at them with a dreamy, far-away look that of itself betokened his early doom.

In an instant the artist grasped the capabilities of this lovely and spiritual face and determined to bring them out to the uttermost.

He grasped the mother's hand as, with tear-filled eyes, she gazed at the likeness of her first-born.

"That is not your Charley," he whispered in her ear; "but wait for a few days and I will give you

Charley himself, so far as canvas and pencil can bring him back to you."

And placing her toll-worn hand on his arm he led her as reverently as her own son could have done from the room.

CHAPTER II.

Alas! how light a cause may move
Dissensions between hearts that love. Moore.

BEFORE the sun had fairly set the stranger had been introduced to the master of the farm, who welcomed him very civilly, and seemed glad to hear from his wife that Charley's portrait was to be painted over and made more lifelike than the representation which had always seemed to him almost like a caricature of the dead boy.

This point settled, the stranger gave his name as Ellis Poynter, and, having thus introduced himself afresh, went out on the porch to smoke a pipe with Farmer Roston, while a boy from the farm went to the next village for his luggage.

It came about nine o'clock—a carpet-bag and a valise—both new and elegant, and very heavy, if John, the hard-boy, was to be believed.

The artist gave him a crown for the service he had rendered, and the lad ran instantly to Frances, to display the first piece of money he had ever earned in his whole life before.

He found her in the artist's room, where she had been superintending the preparations for the young man's stay, and told his tale with open mouth and eyes.

Frances looked at the crown-piece, took it in her hand, sighed softly, and, giving it back to him with a smile, told him, as he left the room, that he was a good boy, and deserved his reward for going so quickly.

She shut the door behind him, and took a short survey of the valise and carpet-bag.

What mysterious, besides innocent clothing, might not lurk within their leather depths—letters, perhaps, from some lady-love—possibly her picture!

And again poor Frances sighed.

Certainly Mr. Ellis Poynter had no reason to fancy that he had made any impression on the heart of the heiress of the Linden Farm when she appeared below.

She stepped out a moment into the porch, where he sat with the farmer, said something about the weather, and then went back again into the sitting-room, sat down by the round lamp and took up her sewing.

How was she to know that the lamp-light fell most becomingly on her blooming face in that peculiar position, or that Mr. Poynter had moved his seat by her father's side to one just opposite, where he could gaze at her unnoticed and unperceived?

Bright and pleasant rose the sun the next morning, and Ellis Poynter arranged a temporary studio in an old, unused grain-loft directly after breakfast—moved his canvas, easel, and brushes there and went to work.

The portrait of little Charley was finished that week, and the mother and father, when first they saw it, burst into tears. For it was Charley himself, as they had seen him in the glow and promise of his early boyhood, and yet with a glance in the eyes and an expression about his mouth that spoke of the heavenly home where he was now dwelling.

A flood of light, skillfully managed, poured down through a high window upon the little golden head, and, leaning back in the antique chair, with his hands clasped, and that patient smile about his lips, he looked indeed like one of whom it might have been said:

"Of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

For this picture the artist would accept no payment.

The only recompense he asked was to be allowed to paint a picture of Frances; and this, after some strange and foolish demur on the girl's part, was at last granted.

Shut up for hours together in that old sunshiny loft, with the glory of the summer all around them, and life's own summer in their beating hearts, what could be expected but that the two young people should fall in love?

Perhaps the good farmer and his wife had no objection; perhaps they even wished that it should be so—for they saw no "lions in the way," and the artist was at liberty to monopolize the girl's society as often and as long as he pleased.

So day after day they were together, and night after night they sat beside each other in the rustic porch, while the farmer smoked his pipe, and talked of his crops and his neighbours; or went strolling down the lane arm-in-arm to hear the nightingale, and stayed listening so long that good Mrs. Roston sometimes privately took her daughter to task on her return.

They parted with that lingering pressure of the

hand which often, says, as much as the most fervent kiss can do.

They were uneasy and silent and absent except when they were together, their eyes were always meeting; and yet through all, not one word of love had the young man spoken, not once had he even hinted at aught that might happen when his time of staying at the farm was at an end.

It was very strange, and Frances in the silence and solitude of her own chamber often confessed to herself it was so.

She could not understand the man whom she knew to be her lover, though an undeclared one. A terrible foreboding began to find a shelter in her breast at last.

Was it possible that he was already bound to another—either by the tie of marriage or that of betrothal?

Might not this account for his silence, for the earnest yet sad look with which he sometimes regarded her—a look which wrung her very heart whenever she met it, and haunted her miserably for hours after it had been given?

The fancy worried and worried her more than she could say, and her cheek grew pale, and the laughing light left her eyes, and her voice was seldom heard in song about the house. And yet he was still silent, apparently unmindful of the change; not even her parents noticed it. Her mother's very heart and soul were at the time in her autumn preserves, her father ever busy with his last crops, and neither of them dreamed that aught of evil or harm could befall their child.

Gradually, as this suspicion resolved itself into a certainty in her tortured breast—as suspicious will so often do—she began to avoid the artist instead of eagerly seeking his society as she had done before.

If he noticed the change he gave no sign. The days went on, and the harvest home—the greatest festival of country life—was close at hand; and Frances, being still the belle of the parish, was called upon to take her usual prominent part in the festivities.

For a moment she hesitated as she saw the artist look anxiously at her. Then woman's pride triumphed over woman's love, and she consented eagerly.

The artist put on his hat when he heard it, without looking at her again; and strode moodily from the house.

The young farmer who had brought the invitation looked after him with a smile.

"Main proud and stuck-up that painter chap seems to be, Miss Frances," he observed. "And I'm glad to see that there's no truth in the story that they have spread about down in the village after all."

"What story?" she asked, with a vivid blush. "Why, they have been saying that you were going to make a match of it with him, and that he was so jealous and proud like that he would hardly let you stir out of the house, and set his foot down that you should never come among us for the old sports any more."

"I am much obliged to 'em, whoever they may be," said Frances, with a haughty toss of her head. "Tell them from me that there is not a word of truth in the story, if you please, Mr. Grey."

"No offence, I hope, Miss Frances."

"None at all."

"And will you dance the first dance with me, Miss Frances?"

She bent her head in acquiescence.

The young man's face brightened wonderfully.

"Perhaps you won't object to my driving you down to the Shire House, Miss Frances," he ventured to say.

She glanced from the window. The artist was far away, strolling down the green lane as unconcerned as if he had not a care or trouble on his mind.

"I shall be very happy to go with you, Mr. Grey," she replied.

And afterwards went to the door with him. Nay, even allowed him to kiss her hand as parting.

She would have been glad had the artist been near to have seen that salute; but he was not in sight.

Nor did she see him again that evening, though she lingered in the sitting-room on one pretence and another till long past her usual hour of retiring.

She went to bed miserable enough, and had the felicity of hearing him tramp up the stairs and slam his door heavily an hour afterwards, while she was lying crying her eyes out for his sake.

Evidently he was furiously angry with her. It was the first time they had parted unkindly during their brief but happy acquaintance.

But Frances was determined to go to the harvest home ball with the young farmer, Henry Grey, all the same.

So strangely are women constituted that they will

tear their own hearts all to pieces for the sake of planting a thorn in the heart of one who ought to love and who seems to slight them.

CHAPTER III.

I loathed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And thus I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beautiful bride. Coleridge.

MR. ELLIS POYNTER saw fit to absent himself on the following day, nor did he return till Frances was stepping into the carriage which was to convey her to the festive scene, at which he had strenuously refused to appear, in spite of the pressing invitation of the old farmer who was one of the stewards of the ball.

Never had Frances looked prettier than at that moment. Her face had been pale and sad during the day, but excitement, and perhaps a touch of jealous anger, had flushed her cheek at last with the deep hue of the damask rose.

She wore a crimson flower in her braided hair; the low-necked, short-sleeved dress, displayed a throat and arms that had no need of ornament, and her large eyes, dark and sparkling, raised themselves to those of her recreant lover with a look that made him quail, and the next moment love her all the more.

What was her charm?

He had seen other women far more beautiful, who would gladly have received his lightest word, or look, or smile. There were

"Maidens in Scotland, more lovely by far,
Who would gladly be bride to the young
Lochinvar."

And yet this little country lassie held his heart in thrall in spite of wounded pride and stern resolve—held it so firmly that as he might it could never gain its liberty again.

He knew this only too well, and, as he returned her glance with one which haunted her through all the gaiety of the evening, he took a stern resolve.

That night should end his uncertainty, and also his bondage. That night he would say what perhaps he ought in honour to have said before, and know if she preferred him to that handsome young farmer or not. He to be weighed in the balance beside a farmer's son! It made him smile as he thought of it, and she saw the smile, and misunderstood it, and drove away, just vouchsafing a slight nod in return for the profound bow he made her.

He went into the house. The old farmer and his wife were deep in the mysteries of the toilet, and could not understand why he would not accompany them, "if only to see Frances dance," as the good dame remarked.

He refused laughingly, went out to help her into the vehicle, and, having watched them also drive away, he went back to his room, candle in hand, and performed a task which would have made the grey eyes of Miss Frances open widely could they but have looked in upon his employment.

The valise, which had once so excited her curiosity, was unlocked and its contents would have fully justified her jealous suspicions had she but been there to see. There was a packet of letters, written in a delicate running hand, and tied with a rose-coloured ribbon; there was a miniature of a lovely blonde—one of those faces of almost impossible beauty which you sometimes encounter in real life; there was a long golden curl, caught with a clasp of turquoise and gold. Over these things, which had once been the treasures of his life, the young man sat pondering with a bitter smile. He read the letters—breathing a woman's love and woman's devotion in every word—with a bitter smile. Then he kindled a flame with them upon the hearth, watched them burn for a moment, looked long and even tenderly at the pictured face, and pressed it with the lock of hair to his lips.

"Almost as much, your slave as ever, Lady Florence," he murmured, with a sigh. "If you but held up your hand to beckon me I am not sure that I should not fly to you even yet. It is time that I put an end to this, and forget your falsehood in the love of a woman who is really as pure and true as you seemed to be, fair lady."

And he dropped the hair and picture together into the blaze, and walked to the window that he might not see them consume.

When he came back again a heap of blackened ashes upon the hearth was all that remained to tell the tale of Ellis Poynter's early love.

Meanwhile poor Frances at the ball was far from finding it the gayest place on earth. She was far from finding it the gayest place, as usual, and looked very pretty, for the trouble at her heart lent new light to her eyes, and an added colour to her cheek; but, oh, how miserable she was through dance after dance as she yielded to the claims of her numerous partners! She talked, but she scarcely knew what she was

saying; she danced, but it was by a mechanical effort alone.

She learned from her mother, on her arrival, that the young artist remained at the farm alone; and though her body graced the ball-room, her spirit was far away, and it was with the most heartfelt satisfaction that she heard the band strike up "God Save the Queen," as a signal that the festivities of the evening were at an end.

Young Farmer Grey was noted throughout the parish for the speed and beauty of his horses, but on this night, once clear of the crowd, he drove almost at a walk, and poor Frances had to endure the pain of listening to an offer of heart and hand from a man whom she esteemed as a friend, but could never learn to love as a husband.

She told him this firmly but kindly, and the refusal was taken in such bad part that the remainder of the drive was anything but pleasant to her.

Arrived at the farm gate, Mr. Grey handed her out, bade her a civil adieu, and drove away, never, perhaps, to enter the familiar precincts again.

Doubtless his heart was heavy. That of Frances was sad enough as she leaned on the gate and watched him out of sight.

Oh, if she had never gone to that evening ball! How lonely and hateful the evening had seemed—how strange it appeared to her that people could enjoy themselves there as they seemed to do! Why even her own father and mother had entered so heartily into the gaiety as to linger behind to finish a game of whist and chat with old friends till twelve rang out from the Shire Hall bell, and dispersed them all.

She had been miserable every hour and moment, and what was more, had offended her two best friends—the one by going, the other by refusing what she, as a true and honest woman, was bound not to accept.

It was a very perplexing and wearisome world, Miss Frances concluded, as she walked slowly up toward the house and saw no light in the window of Ellis Poynter's room.

So, being quite alone in the house, and hearing the clock strike eleven as she reached the porch, she thought the hour before her father and mother arrived could not be better spent than in having what young girls often call a "splendid cry."

Down she sat upon one of the vine-wreathed benches and presently a stifled sob broke upon the air.

There was an uneasy movement at the other end of the bench, and presently a low voice said: "Miss Frances?"

She started violently and peered into the scented gloom.

There sat the artist, and as she looked at him, half-frightened, through her tears, he came close beside her, took her hand, and drew her warm shawl closely around her neck and arms.

"There! Now you will be warm and comfortable, and can sit here for a time with me without catching cold. Make me your father confessor, Frances, will you not? Tell me what troubles you, will you not? I cannot bear to see tears in those bright eyes. Come, tell me all about it. What has grieved you so?"

His tone and his manner were alike gentle and soothing, and never were tears more quickly dried than those.

But to tell him what had caused them! That was quite another affair, you see. So she merely sat silent and let him carry on the conversation if he chose to do so.

"I could bear anything better than to see you sad," he went on. "I have had a long lonely evening here by myself, with only sad memories of a very sad past for my companions, but even that were better than seeing you weep."

"I knew you would be lonely," was her reply.

"You should have gone to the ball."

"For what? To see you admired by a hundred men, all younger, handsomer, and better calculated to win your eye and heart than I? No, Frances, I was wise enough to spare myself such a trial. I am afraid I should not have borne it very patiently."

"I wonder what he would say if he knew of Mr. Grey's offer?" thought Miss Frances, but she had the good taste to keep that piece of news to herself. Whatever Mr. Poynter might have guessed as to the events of the evening, he was none the wiser for any secret that her lips betrayed.

Again he went on:

"Have your father and mother returned, Frances?"

"Not yet. They will be here a little after twelve."

"Then the next hour holds either bliss unpeakable or sorrow without measure for me," he said, fervently. "Do you understand me, Frances?"

She only told the truth in saying that she did not.

"All this long evening, as I told you, I have been thinking of the past, and it holds no very pleasant memories for me. I have done with it now for ever. Its last relic has been destroyed to-night."

Then that valise did contain "all sorts of things," even as she had imagined.

Miss Frances would have given a great deal if she could have but assisted at that incrimination, and known just what sort of a rival she had to fear in that dread and never-to-be-forgotten past, whose memories her lover found so painful.

"Let the past go," he continued. "Now I turn to the future, and it rests with you; dearest, to say what that shall be."

Yes, that was all very fine, but if she could only know about the past, too, how much better it would be, thought the perverse little thing.

"Frances, do you hear me? Will you not give me an answer?"

"What shall I say?" she murmured.

"Say if you can love me."

"I think I can try," she answered, archly.

"And will you try?"

"Yes."

"Oh, Frances, my darling, do you know what you are saying? You only know me as a poor artist. If I give you a home far beneath this in point of comfort, can you be content?"

"Yes, if you are there with me," she answered, with a heavenly smile.

"Think well. Because I am so poor I will accept no dowry with you. Not a penny of your father's money must you touch after you are my wife. You must depend on me for all your comforts, and they may be very few. Will you still go with me after all that I have told you?"

She laid her hand in his, and her head upon his shoulder in reply.

He drew her closely to his heart and their lips met in a

"Long, long kiss,
A kiss of youth and love."

And Miss Frances began to discover that the world was not so very dreary a place to live in after all.

(To be continued.)

CONSCIENCE.

WE often hear people remark of others who have committed great crimes that they have no consciences, but this remark does not long hold good. A dark unknown is ever before a guilty mind; solitude is unendurable, and the midnight hours are filled with horror.

Many years ago the following event is said to have occurred, which is an illustration of the vigilance of that sleepless monitor who will not be quieted when guilt is in the heart.

A wealthy jeweller, a man of respectability, had some business which called him some distance from home, and took his servant along with him. The servant knew that his master had a large amount of jewellery besides much money with him. The master dismounted and his servant took this opportunity to despatch him; so drawing a pistol from his master's saddle-bags he shot him dead on the spot, and hanging a large stone to his neck, threw him into the nearest stream, and made off with his booty. He removed into a distant land, where neither was ever heard of before, and commenced business in a small way at first, to disguise his real amount of property. For some years he continued to prosper, gradually rising in favour with the community, until at length a great city grew up around him. He had now established a fair reputation, and married a lady of great worth, who was highly connected. He had now risen to be a magistrate, and became a judge in one of the highest tribunals. A criminal was brought before him who was accused of murdering his master! He was tried by a jury and pronounced guilty. As is usual, the judge was in due time to pass upon him his sentence. For some days it was deferred on account of his illness. His physicians were unable to determine the nature or name of his disease; but as an unnatural agitation preyed upon his mind, they administered opiates and quieted him for a season. Then an outbreak would follow, and such convulsive throes of agony ensued, as made those in his presence tremble. At length, however, he was so far restored as to be led into court to pass sentence upon the unfortunate man. Instead, however, he passed the sentence upon himself.

"You see," he said, "Heaven's award upon my misdeeds. Twenty-five years ago to-day I killed my master. I can no longer conceal the fact, and instead of passing sentence of condemnation upon another, I feel, gentlemen, as if the like sentence should be passed upon myself!"

The agitation which ensued was indescribable, and

in a few weeks the confessor died from the stings of a sleepless conscience.

We need more charitable judgment in our community. We are apt to brand every guilty person as living without remorse—as having "no conscience," and a fit subject for condign punishment. All this, too, is done by good Christian people, who profess to believe in a future state of rewards and punishments. Why are they not willing, then, to wait the Almighty's prerogative of justice?

There is another practice in some well-ordered families, which is, that any article misplaced, lost, or unaccounted for, is often laid to the servants' account. I was forcibly reminded of this defect a few days since.

"I have lost a valuable diamond ring," said a friend to me, "and I think I know where it went; my cook has never looked right about it since; I can read guilt in her countenance, she does not know I suspect her."

In a few days after I inquired concerning the ring.

"Oh," said the lady, "I found it in my own drawer under a pile of handkerchiefs! But my cook left me because Augustus said to her, 'Mother knows who stole the ring.' You know children will talk!"

And might she not have added, "will quote what they hear parents say"? There is too much of this off-hand condemnation—too suspicious individuals, who can read guilt where conscious innocence sometimes produces agitation. It is better always to lean on mercy's side. Depend on it, real guilt is enough its own tormentor; and be not in haste to accuse until proof is furnished that suspicions are well grounded. E. W.

SCIENCE.

USE OF GAS IN COAL-MINES.—The use of gas for lighting coal-mines is progressing steadily. The apparatus has been fixed in several collieries in Yorkshire as well as in the North, and is said to give satisfactory results. A jet of steam is employed to draw the gas into a pipe and force it to the bottom of the mine, and in one instance the gas has been sent to a depth of 500 yards below the surface.

THE WIND AS A MOTIVE POWER.—The available power of four vertical sails as usually constructed, say 20ft. long and 10ft. wide, presenting a total surface of 800ft. to the wind, would for manufacturing purposes be equal to about 50 tons of coals in a year, say one ton per week; but to render this available one part of the power will have to be used during nights and Sundays, so that if wind could be used without attendance during nights and Sundays in pumping water, and the water power afterwards used for working machinery during working hours, it would be a step towards rendering manufacturers independent of coal-mines, and as the power of the wind is practically unlimited it points to the future of manufacturing power; but as 30 per cent. of the effective power would be absorbed in raising the water, and 30 per cent. more wasted in using the water on a turbine or overshot wheel, the price of coals will have to be 40s. per ton before wind will prove the cheaper power.

NEW PROCESS FOR MAKING STEEL DISCS.—A new process for making steel discs is spoken of—viz., by heating the metal to a white heat in a close chamber to exclude the air, and then pressing it upon the material to be copied. It is claimed that by means of this process the hardest steel may be stamped by any soft metal—even lead—so as to make a perfect die of the objects impressed. A carved ring, for instance, might be used to stamp its own image on the hardest and most finely-tempered steel, reproducing all its delicate tracing and outline with absolute precision and perfection without injury to the stone. It is said that the secret of this being able to bring together friable and easily melted substances, such as lead or precious stones, with semi-fused steel, consists in the process of heating the steel disc, which must be in a certain degree of temperature. Admitting the possibility of such a thing, we might remark that it would enable every counterfeiter to get perfectly accurate dies of all kinds of coins, and may be used for the cheap reproduction in steel of any kind of engraving in wood, copper, or type metal. The most elegant chasing, heretofore made at great expense, might thus be cheaply stamped, and the small castings of copper, brass, and bronze might be imitated in the hardest steel. Stereotype plates that will defy the wear of years may be made in the same manner.

MINERAL WEALTH OF BURMAH.—According to a memorandum laid before the Indian Department of Agriculture, Revenue, and Commerce, by Capt. G. A. Stover, our political agent at Mandalay, Upper Burma is richer in metals and minerals than any other country in the known world. Gold exists in profusion in the rivers and streams, and in many districts

the gold quartz is found in abundance; but the localities are generally malarious, and the mines are not developed. Silver is found in quantities sufficient, with importations from Yunnan, to serve all the requirements of the country. Rich deposits of copper exist, but are unutilized. Iron abounds in the Shan States and the districts south of Mandalay. His Majesty has engaged two mining engineers, and is procuring machinery from England to work the ore. The surface hematite alone will feed a large foundry for many years. Lead is plentiful, but only sufficient to supply the country is at present produced. Tin exists in the Shan States to the south-east of Mandalay, but the mines have never been worked. Coal beds of excellent quality, "equal to the best English coal," have been discovered in many districts, but so far inland that transport would be difficult.

STEEL BOILERS.—The American steamboat "Mary Powell" has recently been fitted with steel boilers. There are two boilers, of the form known as fusé and return tubular. Each boiler has 10 tubes of different diameters, 9, 15, and 16 inches, and 80 tubes of 4½ inches outside diameter. Each boiler is 11ft. front, 25ft. long, and the diameter of shell is 10ft. The sheets of the boiler are of steel, having a tensile strength of 700,000 pounds per square inch. The sheets are 5-16 of an inch thick. Each boiler has two furnaces, each 8ft. in length and 4½ft. wide. Blowers were used with the former boilers to promote the draught, but a novel form of steam jet is at present employed which seems to work very satisfactorily. The grate bars are cylindrical in form on top, and are provided with mechanism so that the fire can be shaken down when it is dull, somewhat after the manner of a grate in an ordinary stove. The boilers weigh 23 tons each, the weight of the two being 7 tons less than that of the old boilers. The diameter of the steam cylinder is 62in., and the stroke is 12ft. The engine makes 23 revolutions per minute, the steam pressure being between 35 and 36 pounds.

CONGELATION OF ALCOHOLIC DRINKS.—M. Melsens has addressed quite a novel communication to the French Academy of Sciences—the effects of cold on the taste of wines and spirits. Cognac, for instance, cooled down to 20, 30, or 35 deg. Cent. below freezing point has, he says, been found exquisite by tasters, and all the mellow the colder it was. Wooden goblets should be used in that case, to prevent the iciness of the glass from interfering with the taste. At 30 deg. below zero liquids containing about half their volume of absolute alcohol become viscous, syrupy, and sometimes opaline. M. Melsens has reduced both cognac and rum to a solid state at 40 and 50 deg. below zero; they may be taken by teaspoonfuls like sorbet, and the very slight sensation of cold they impart is astonishing. The "paste" melting on the tongue is not half so cold as usual ices, and many tasters to whom it was given refused to believe that they were taking frozen liquids which might have been presented to them in a vessel of congealed mercury (that metal, it is known, freezes at 40 deg. C.), and that they were bearing without the slightest inconvenience the contact of a substance cooled by the "evaporation" of solid carbonic acid, capable of producing on the skin the same effect as a red-hot iron. M. Donny, of Gand, has written to M. Melsens that upwards of 100 persons have tasted of this new kind of ice, and found them "agreeable" at a temperature varying between 40 deg. and 50 deg. below zero. One must go down to 60 deg. to hear any one say "it is cold;" the exclamation "it is very cold" is very rarely heard. The lowest temperature attained is 71 deg. C. below, at which point a spoonful of congealed liquid produces the sensation of soup that is a little too hot! A "bit" of such brandy laid on the skin will slightly cauterise it, but without absolutely burning it like frozen ether or solid carbonic acid. When equal quantities of sparkling and still wines are cooled down the apparent increase of volume is much greater in the former than in the latter, in the proportion of four to one.

TIN AS A FILLING FOR THE TEETH.—Dr. E. W. Foster says tin possesses many considerations of fitness for stopping carious teeth not held by gold. Its freedom from being suddenly affected by thermal changes, its plasticity and ease of adaptability to all the irregularities of the cavity, its permanency in the cavity, its comparatively low specific gravity, are some of the prominent facts connected with this metal that make it no mean competitor with gold in the important question of filling the teeth. The prejudice is general against this foil, and from grounds not entirely reasonable. It can be used either for permanent fillings or to precede gold in the soft, vascular teeth of children and youth. As to the extreme permanency of tin when removed from the attrition of mastication it will be difficult to determine, yet tin fillings between thirty and forty years of age have been found still serviceable and in good condition. The low specific gravity of tin and its non-irritating nature, resembling in the

latter trait though in a less degree the same remarkable quality possessed by lead, enable it to rest with comparative non-disturbance even in the midst of vital presences. For this reason lead had long been used for filling teeth in many countries of Europe. In France especially it was the material par excellence for such purposes, and it may not be uninteresting to remark that the very word in the French language used to signify the term "filling teeth" is "plomber," a word of historical significance in this connection, being derived from the name and the fact of lead being used as a stopping for teeth even so far back as the formation of that language. Though tin is easier of manipulation than gold the same care to the same end should govern its introduction into the cavity, its condensation and finish afterwards. If the cavity is large and nerve nearly exposed the use of polishing powder (oxide of tin) moistened with water or glycerine and applied to the walls of the cavity before the introduction of the tin will produce agreeable and substantial results.

MARRYING WITHOUT LOVE.

MANY a young lady writes to us, saying that she has had an advantageous offer of marriage. The man who has made it is of exemplary character; he is well-off in this world's goods; is engaged in a profitable and reputable business, and there is no particular reason why she should not accept his proposal—but that she does not love him.

In our judgment that is reason enough. We do not believe in marriage without love. Respect is all very well, and that one should have anyway; but it does not take the place of affection.

It is said that, in such matches, love comes after marriage. We have no doubt that it often does. But we think love should precede as well as follow matrimony. It is always liable to happen to one who has never loved. But suppose it is awakened for the first time in a wife, subsequent to marriage, and the object happens to be another than the husband, what then? This is a contingency not pleasant to contemplate.

No; if you do not love, then do not marry. Singleness is blessedness compared to marriage without affection. The connubial yoke sits easy on the shoulders of love; but it is most galling without this one and only sufficient support.

ORIGIN OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND

MR. WALTER BAGEHOT, in his work "Lombard Street," recently published, says the Bank of England was founded by a Whig Government because it was in desperate want of money, and supported by the "City" because the "City" was Whig. Very briefly, the story was this:—

The Government of Charles II. (under the Cabal ministry) had brought the credit of the English State to the lowest possible point. It had perpetrated one of those monstrous frauds which are likewise gross blunders. The goldsmiths, who then carried on upon a trifling scale what we should now call banking, used to deposit their reserve of treasure in the "Exchequer," with the sanction and under the care of the Government. In many European countries the credit of the State had been so much better than any other credit, that it had been used to strengthen the beginnings of banking. The credit of the State had been so used in England; though there had lately been a civil war and several revolutions, the honesty of the English Government was trusted implicitly. But Charles II. showed that it was trusted undeservedly. He shut up the "Exchequer," would pay no one, and so the "goldsmiths" were ruined. The credit of the Stuart Government never recovered from this monstrous robbery, and the Government created by the Revolution of 1688 could hardly expect to be more trusted with money than its predecessor. A government created by a revolution hardly ever is. There is a taint of violence which capitalists dread instinctively, and there is always a rational apprehension that the government which one revolution thought fit to set up another revolution may think fit to pull down. In 1694, the credit of William III.'s Government was so low in London that it was impossible for it to borrow any large sums; and the evil was greater because, in consequence of the French war, the financial straits of the Government were extreme.

At last a scheme was hit upon which would relieve their necessities. "The plan," says Macaulay, "was that twelve hundred thousand pounds should be raised at what was then considered the moderate rate of 8 per cent." In order to induce the subscribers to advance the money promptly on terms so unfavourable to the public, the subscribers were to be incorporated by the name of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England. They were so incorporated, and the £200,000 was obtained. On many succeeding occasions their credit was of great use to the Government. Without their aid our national debt could not have been borrowed; and if we

had not been able to raise that money we should have been conquered by France, and compelled to take back James II.

THE HEIRESS OF CLANRONALD.

CHAPTER VIII.

Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon. *Shakespeare.*

"ONE little sprinkle means death."

Over and over again Lady Ryhope repeats these terrible words, as she tosses from side to side on her downy pillows.

She has swallowed the composing draught prepared by Doctor Wurt, who was summoned while she lay in that deathlike swoon and dismissed her attendants that she might sleep.

But her eyes are wide open and wild with horror. She clutches her white hands into her blonde curls, and moans like one in awful agony.

"Oh," she wails, "what have I done—what have I done! 'One little sprinkle means death!' Oh, Heaven, if I could recall it! Oh, what shall I do?" May, her daughter, lingering in the corridor without, hears the incoherent moaning and enters softly.

"Mamma, dearest mamma," she murmurs, bending over the prostrate lady, "what can I do for you? Are you in much pain that you moan so? May I call papa?"

Lady Laura starts up, with a smothered cry. "Call him!" she cries wildly. "No, no; but where is he—where is Sir Roger?"

"In the library," May replies, wondering at her mother's excitement; "I saw him enter as I came up. Shall I call him?"

"No, I tell you, no!" shrieks her mother; "how dare you come here to disturb me! Go away, go—I want to go to sleep."

Poor little May leaves the chamber, her lips quivering and suppressed sobs heaving her breast.

She crosses to the library door and raps timidly. Her father's voice bids her enter.

He is reclining on a couch, his face looking almost deathlike in the glow of the glimmering waxlights.

"You are not well, papa," she says, kneeling down beside him.

"I am not ill, my love," he replies, evasively, "only a little tired; but I'm glad you've come. Won't you sing for me, sweet? My old songs, you know."

She goes to the piano and obeys.

For an hour, perhaps, she sings one old ballad after another, her birdlike voice filling all the solemn night with tender melody. Then she returns to his side.

He lies motionless, his eyes closed, a deadly pallor on his face.

"Are you asleep, papa?" she whispers, half in terror.

"Not quite, dear, but I'm tired, so tired, May. I should be glad to sleep that long, last sleep that knows no waking but for leaving you, my darling."

"Oh, papa, don't talk so," she entreats, amid streaming tears.

"Then I won't. There, pet, don't cry. I feel better now. What hour is that? Twelve, as I live. You must hasten to bed, May. We must be up in time for that drive we planned. Come, kiss me good-night, and go."

She kisses him over and over, and he strains her convulsively to his heart.

"Heaven take care of you, my darling!"

At the door she looks back.

"Papa, you are not going to bed; let me stay with you!"

"No, my child, I don't need you. I shan't be up long."

She turns away reluctantly, and as far he can see her down the long hall she is looking back, with tender solicitude in her swimming eyes.

"Darling May," he murmurs, "how strong the likeness is to-night! How strange it is! How much she resembles my poor Marie!"

He closes the door, and sitting down before a small cabinet, unlocks a secret drawer, and takes out a gold-encased miniature, and a tress of flowing hair. He gazes upon the miniature long and sadly.

It is Marie's face, and in the pure features and sweet, tender eyes there is a striking resemblance of May. Yet between the two no kindred ties existed, unless perhaps the father's deathless love had wrought some mystic union.

Sir Roger liked to fancy this, and her strange likeness to his lost love was the secret of his great tenderness for his daughter.

His tears fell fast over the mute portrait and the tress of silken hair.

"She was true to me," he moaned. "She loved me, and I murdered her! Oh, Heaven! is there any

pardon for me? I was insane, jealous. I did not mean to commit the awful deed! Will years of bitter penitence atone for it? Will Heaven at last have mercy? Marie, Marie, I would give my soul to undo that awful deed!"

A sharp pain stopped his breath, and great beads of sweat stood like dew on his brow.

He arose, and staggered across the room.

"What is it?" he gasped, sinking on the couch.

"It must be death! That wine had a strange bitter taste! And Lady Ryhope strove to dash it from my lips. Great Heaven! I wonder if she wants me out of her way? Can the wine have been poisoned?"

He lay prostrate a few moments, breathing hard. Then he started up, and fell upon his knees.

"It is death," he gasped. "Heaven is just. I murdered poor Marie, and the mother of my children has murdered me. Heaven have mercy on her, and save my guilty soul."

The prayer ended in an inarticulate whisper. He sank down into a limp heap, his ghastly face looking upward.

Presently a strange, happy smile flashed like sunlight over his dying features, he threw up his hands with a cry of joy and recognition and cried:

"Marie, Marie!"

His head fell back, his nerveless arms dropped, and all was silent.

When May left her father she passed her mother's chamber on her way to her own apartments, and paused almost involuntarily, for an instant, at the door.

It swung open silently, and Lady Laura's white, horror-stricken face peered out.

"Oh, mamma," cried May, in affright, "what is the matter?"

"Hush," gasped her mother. "What are you doing here? Where is your father?"

"In the library," responded May. "I have this moment left him, and he seems to be ill."

Her mother grasped her arm like a vice.

"Silence," she commanded, in a fierce whisper, "he's not ill—go to your room this instant, go!"

May obeyed, overwhelmed with terror and amazement.

Lady Ryhope went back to her chamber, and sitting down upon the velvet rug, buried her face in the folds of her rich dress.

"Oh, great Heaven," she moaned rocking herself to and fro, "if I could but recall it! I shall never know another hour's peace! I am a murderess!"

By-and-bye she arose and left her chamber with a stealthy step.

She sped down the long corridor, and across to the door of the library.

It was closed, and within all was as silent as the grave, but a dim light flickered through the keyhole. The miserable woman put her hand on the knob, but her heart failed her—she could not open the door.

At last she stooped down and put her eye to the keyhole. The light was strong in the apartment, and she could easily distinguish one object from another.

There lay Sir Roger upon the floor. She could see his limbs doubled up, and catch a glimpse of his ghastly face.

Then a sudden fear of detection clutched her heart and she fled away with noiseless feet, and locked herself in her own apartments.

CHAPTER IX.

Man wants but little, nor that little long:
How soon must he resign his very dust,
Which frugal nature lent him for an hour.

Young.

"SEN here, Lady Ryhope," cried the Marquis of Keith, advancing into the pleasant breakfast parlour, where Lady Ryhope's guests were assembled, awaiting the appearance of the baronet, and exhibiting a fine brace of pheasants; "you didn't think I was so skilful, did you? I've been out of bed for an age, and down in the South Coppice."

Lady Laura smiled pleasantly.

She was excessively pale, but quite recovered from her transient illness, she asserted.

"You are skilful," she replied. "I wish Sir Roger would follow your example; he grows fonder of his morning nap every day he lives. Thomas, will you go up and see if your master is quite ready? Say to him that breakfast will be spoiled."

Thomas departed, and Lady Ryhope turned pleasantly to the duchess.

"I know your grace dislikes to wait," she said; "but Sir Roger is excusable, he is not well—not at all well of late."

Her lips whitened and twitch spasmodically as she speaks, and she clutches her hands together as she seats herself behind the silver service with a force that makes her delicate nails grow blue.

The marquis plucks a spray of purple heliotrope from a vase in the window, and hangs it amid Lady Caroline Stanhope's flossy curls, to that young per-

son's unspeakable delight. Then he offers his arm to lead her to the table.

Lord Raeburn and Eustace come in from the terrace, the former with an uncut novel in his hand. He glances once across the table at Lady Laura, then strolls on to the open window.

"Come, friends," says Lady Ryhope, struggling against the deadly fear that threatens to overpower her, "sit down to breakfast, and please excuse Sir Roger—he will be with us directly."

They gather round the glittering table with its flowers and costly adornments.

The duchess reaches impatiently for her coffee, and Captain Lamont is on the point of breaking an egg when Thomas returns.

"I beg your ladyship's pardon," he says, "but Sir Roger is not in his room, and the bed hasn't been slept in."

Lady Laura starts up in a tremor, but sits down again in the next breath.

"That's strange," she manages to say, her utterance thick and inarticulate. "Go to the library, Thomas; perhaps he is there."

Thomas obeys, and Captain Lamont glances across at her ladyship with peculiar significance in his black eyes.

She spills the chocolate over the snowy damask, and her hands shake nervously.

One minute elapses, and a shriek rings through the sounding corridors—a shriek of agony.

Lady Ryhope starts up, followed by her guests.

"Go, Eustace, my son," she implores, "and learn what has happened."

Eustace bounds up the staircase, and on the upper landing encounters Thomas, his face blanched.

"Sir Roger's dead!" he gasped, "dead in the library—dead as a stone."

The guests below hear his words, and hurry after Eustace; only Lady Ryhope remains below, half-fainting in her chair.

Lord Raeburn glances back and, seeing her, rushes to her side.

"For Heaven's sake, don't betray yourself," he breathes in her ear. "You were strong enough to do the deed, be strong now!"

The sound of his voice thrills her like an electric shock. She darts after her guests, up the oaken stairs. They hurry to the library, and there they find Sir Roger on the carpet, in a crumpled heap, rigid, cold, and dead. May is on her knees beside him, vainly striving to kiss back the life to his icy lips—vainly enough, for Sir Roger, the thirteenth baronet of Ryhope Manor, is dead.

Doctor Wurt comes again, and pronounces it heart disease. The baronet has had it a number of years; he always expected him to die in this way.

Lady Laura goes off into hysterics, and has to be put to bed, and the Duchess of Clydesdale undertakes to manage in her stead.

They robe the baronet for his last long home, and in so doing find the golden miniature and the tress of shining hair hidden in his bosom. The marquis goes to his mother with the mementoes in his hand.

"Put them back," she commands, "right where you found them. The secret must be buried with him. Poor Sir Roger, that accounts for the sad face he wore."

And Lord Keith obeys, and Sir Roger goes to the grave with Marie's picture, Marie's shining hair, lying on his pulseless heart.

The same soft sunlight that streams in solemn splendour through the heavy curtains in the grand drawing-room at Ryhope Manor, gleaming on the silver mountings of the coffin, and on the white roses scattered on its velvet pall, shoots in yellow, garish beams through the one square window in the little reddish-brown cottage, revealing with painful distinctness the yellow walls, the bare floor and the plain coffin standing in its centre.

It seemed almost like profanation for anything so sacred as death to be in that bare room, with no shadowy drapery, none of the softening surroundings of wealth and beauty to subdue the reality. We have all experienced this feeling, standing in the presence of death in a poor and comfortable apartment. It seemed to strike with a keener horror in the small room with its one unshaded window than it did in the grand hall with its soft lights and purple hangings. Wealth and grandeur are great magicians; they throw a bewildering glamour before our eyes; but after all the reality is the same.

Grand'ther Doon is dead, and Daisy and Ichabod, sitting beside his coffin, feel their inability to shroud and beautify his remains. As a last effort the girl goes out to the little garden and plucks the choicest blooms, creamy roses and purple pansy tufts and all that is sweet and fragrant, and turning to the glaring room she opens the coffin and ranges them beside the placid, peaceful face; then closing it again she strews them profusely over the lid.

He is dead—patient, brave old grand'ther, and his death was like his life. Sitting under the old maple in the twilight, with the cobbler's stand beside him, he watched the September stars shining far above. Presently he cried to Ichabod.

"Come, my lad, throw by the work and bring out the old violin—I'm tired."

Ichabod obeyed, and Daisy, kneeling beside the chair, listened to the strange, thrilling melody that rang out upon the solemn night, while the old man stroked and caressed her hair.

By-and-bye the caressing hand grew still and rested on her head a dead weight. Ichabod played on till all the Durham hills were alive with melodious echoes. At last Daisy looked up.

"Grand'ther, are you asleep?" she said.

The old maple rustled and whispered, but grand'ther made no answer. He was dead.

Poor Daisy! Over and over again in the dreary years of their irksome toil and privation she had grown discontented, and uttered unkind, repining words, when her hands were weary with performing their oft-repeated tasks; but as she sits there with that plain coffin before her aching eyes, every such word comes back to her memory like a poisoned thorn.

She is free now to come and go at her leisure; no more little offices of love to perform; no extra bits to cook at mealtimes; no rambling childish talk to heed, no feeble steps to guide. She is free, yet with an agony that almost bursts her heart she longs for her old bondage again; one week, day, even hour, of the past, with grand'ther sitting in his leather chair, under the old maple tree. Poor Daisy! like too many others, she had undervalued the present while it belonged to her, and mourned for it when it was gone.

Bitterer, yet not so remorseful, were the feelings of Ichabod as he sat on the worn doorstep, catching a faint sound of his sister's passionate sobbing.

The gravedigger fashions a grave for Grand'ther Doon in a shady corner of the churchyard, and just as the grand cortège passes down from Ryhope Manor, the hearse, with its sable plumes and sombre drapings, followed by the long line of glittering equipages that followed Sir Roger Ryhope to his last resting-place, amid the storied tombs of his ancestors, they bear the humble coffin in which grand'ther lies down to the sunny corner in the churchyard, and followed by Ichabod and Daisy and Jack—now Midshipman Turf—and a few of the humblest of the parishioners.

But the same earth covers each paleless bosom, and above each dreamless head we hear the same triumphant exclamation:

"I am the resurrection and the life!"

CHAPTER X.

What great ones do the less will prattle of.

Shakespeare.

MISS LOTTIE LOVEL sat at the breezy window of her little shop less than a year after the death of Sir Roger Ryhope, busily engaged with a handsome black silk dress for the wife of the rector, Mrs. Theodore Tyndale.

As she laid the plaits round the ample waist, Miss Lottie sang the opening stanza of that fine old hymn, "God Moves in a Mysterious Way."

About the second verse she was interrupted by a rap at the door.

Dropping her work, and giving her apron a little shake, she darted to the glass to assure herself that her cap-ribbons were all right; then she ran forward to answer the summons.

"Well, if it ain't Mrs. Murdoch!" she exclaimed, upon opening the door. "La, now, who'd a-thought it? Come in, do, Mrs. Murdoch, I am glad to see you."

Mrs. Murdoch, the housekeeper at Ryhope, stepped in, rustling her black silk dress as she did so.

Miss Lottie took her hand almost reverently. "It is an honour," she said, "which I allers will say. Will you walk in, Mrs. Murdoch, or would you please to look 't the shop?"

"I'll walk in now," replied the Ryhope housekeeper. "I'm a bit out o' breath comin' down that hill; but providin' you have a bit o' good cap net, I'll look in afore I start."

"As good as can be had this side o' Lunnon," replied the little milliner, as she led the way into her best sitting-room. "Lay off your things, do, while I fetch a sup o' coddle wine to moisten your throat after your hot walk 't the sun."

The housekeeper sat down, spreading her rustling skirts over the chintz cushions.

"I've been comin' down for the last week," she remarked, with an air of mystery, "because I want to have a confidential talk, Miss Lottie—I must speak to some one."

Miss Lottie dropped into a low seat, her blue eyes twinkling with delight.

"Go on Mrs. Murdoch."

"Well, I s'pose, of course, you've heard the reports?"

"Why, dear heart, never a word. I'm a home-body, Mrs. Murdoch, and hears nothin'. What be they about?"

"Why, Lady Ryhope, to be sure; they're in everybody's mouth—I was sure you'd heard 'em."

"Not a sentence; but do go on, Mrs. Murdoch—but have a drop o' the coddle wine."

The housekeeper held out her glass and continued in a cautious tone, pausing now and then to take a sip.

"They say she don't care a straw for poor Sir Roger's death."

"Why, I thought she took on very much," put in Miss Lottie.

"So she did at first. La, it made my hair rise to see her the night after he was buried. She was like a wild creature, a tearin' out her curls an' a wringin' her hands, and a prayin' Heaven to forgive her. Miss Lottie, and her voice dropped to an awed whisper, 'I never breathed it to a soul alive, but do ye know I've thought there was something wrong.'"

"What do you mean?" cried the other, panting with excitement.

"Sir Roger died very sudden," said Mrs. Murdoch, significantly; "and the very night he died Lady Ryhope fainted dead at dinner. Not as I know, Miss Lottie, but it looks strange. An' then she took on so, a cryin' and a prayin', and not a wink would she sleep 'cept me or Tulp be a sittin' right by her. And Tulp says, and she's a truthful woman, she says as Lady Ryhope woke up all of a sudden one night and screamed out, callin' herself a murderess, and prayin' Heaven to forgive her."

"Mrs. Murdoch, you take away one's breath," cried Miss Lottie.

"Mind, I only say it be strange," continued the housekeeper; "but her ladyship be well o'er all that kind now. She's got a queer, hardened look about the eyes, though, not a bit like what she was 'fore the master's death; and she's throsin' three times a day, and a ridin' out, and receivin' company just like any young miss, and she the mother o' two grown children. 'Tis a cryin' shame, an' I will say it come what may."

Miss Lottie looked the pious horror that no words could express.

"And there's that Lord Raeburn, as used to be Cap'n Lamont, he jest lives at the manor; and which I never have mentioned, it not bein' my habit to tell tales out o' the family; but old Mrs. Brown, as lives w't the rector, told me, and a truthfuller woman don't live, as this same Cap'n Lamont was a lover of Lady Ryhope's afore she married the baronet Now!"

"Now!" echoed Miss Lottie.

"'Tis so—he was her lover; she was Lady Laura Penvensey then, and he was too poor. She tuk Sir Roger for his fortune, and I never see a man have such a broken-hearted look to the very day o' his death. La, Miss Lottie, these great doin' be no better an' small folk arter all."

"Not so good; I allers will say that."

"Well, the captain's arter her agin, and she'll take him this time. She's rich enough now, and he's a peer; she'll take him. But they say he's awful dissipated, and a gambler; and what's more, my lady's laid out to marry poor little May to old Lord Shaftsbury—you know him."

"I do, certain, the old sinner, w't his diamond pin and his yellow gloves, and never a tooth 't his gums, and jest as impudent as any young guardsman. Didn't he wink and nod at me the day I went to the dinner 't the park, and wore my new blue gown, didn't he?"

"'Twould be jest like him; and poor May shivers at his very name. An' there's young Squire Renshaw, a decent young man, and handsome, tall and straight, and w't a kind word for every one he meets, an' he loves the ground May walks on. But Lady Ryhope won't ever hear to that, not she. I'm sorry enough for little May; I dandled her on my knee when she was a bit o' baby, but I don't see as I ken help her; I can't run agin Lady Ryhope, and I've made up my mind to leave. I'm goin' to Lunnon, where my son lives, to see if he an' his wife can gi' me a room in their house; an' I want to leave a couple of trunks w't you, if you don't object."

"No, indeed; bring 'em and welcome. But I'm real sorry you're goin', Mrs. Murdoch."

"And I'm sorry to leave; but I see as there's trouble ahead, and I don't want to be mixed up in it. But dearie me, the sun's quite out o' sight; I must hurry back, if you'll give me a peep at that cap-net, Miss Lottie."

Miss Lottie led the way to the small shop, its show-cases gay with cheap flowers and bright-coloured ribbons.

The bit of cap-net was displayed, and duly bought and paid for, and then Mrs. Murdoch took her departure.

CHAPTER XI.

But all was false and hollow, though his tongue
Dropt manna; and could make the worse appear
The better reason.

THE day was announced for Lady Laura Ryhope's second marriage.

The satin and point-lace, and the costly bridal veil were on their way from Paris, and the old Ryhope and Pevensy diamonds were being reset in London.

A very regal bride would Lady Laura make, for she was an extremely handsome woman, too handsome and young-looking, one thought, to be the mother of grown-up children.

Lord Raeburn naturally would feel quite proud of his bride. His handsome Spanish eyes wore their wonted expression of sleepy content, but the ex-guardsman was not a demonstrative man, and it was hard to say whether that content arose from a knowledge of the handsome income she would bring him, or from single-hearted satisfaction at having at last secured the object of his early affection.

Be that as it may, Lady Laura herself was exceedingly delighted, and entered into the preparations for her wedding with the eager joy of a young girl. In the days of her girlhood this handsome captain had won all the love her heart possessed; and, notwithstanding the fact that her father had changed in a measure, having grown to be a little matter of fact in sentiment, and slightly condescending in person, still the sound of his voice, the very echo of his name, awoke a host of dormant emotions and tender memories, which made the laughing, unrepentant woman blush and tremble like a girl.

And the wedding-day was drawing near, and at the suggestion of the groom, that there was to be a great feast, and a dance on the lawn, to which the whole parish must be invited.

Lady Laura acquiesced, as she did in all things.

It was patent to all eyes that Lady Laura, who had queneed it so grandly over poor, remorse-stricken Sir Roger, had at last found her master.

Little Ryhope was a good deal excited over the approaching event. It was a kind and thoughtful thing on the part of Lord Raeburn.

But a few knowing ones nodded wisely. Lord Raeburn knew what he was after. He wanted to be a popular man in Durham—to take a rising stand in parliament. He was not giving away his roast beef and brown ale for nothing.

Mrs. Tyndale, the worthy rector's wife, whose maternal relatives still carried on a kind of haberdasher business somewhere in the vicinity of Gilbert Gardens, was gravely exercised on the impropriety of such mixed assemblies, and wondered that Lady Ryhope would suffer it.

Yet she decided to go, and had some half-dozen hands at work on silks and tissues and Mechlin lace for herself and daughters.

Some few thought such an early exhibitor disrespectful to the memory of the late baronet, and thus speculating and surmising, the whole neighbourhood was in a buzz of expectation and excitement.

Miss Lottie Lovel was the first to bring the news to the little reddish-brown cottage.

It was a pleasant September afternoon, and Daisy and Ichabod sat at their work in the small front chamber.

This room had changed somewhat since grandfather's death.

The old cobbler's bench was still under the window, but a strip of bright carpet covered the floor, and a small melodeon and a brand-new violin-case and sundry books scattered here and there gave the bare room an aspect a trifle more comfortable and homelike.

Daisy had changed also. From the awkward, brown-skinned child she had burst, as if by magic, into a glorious woman, like the pale, scentless rosebuds we see at times bursting beneath the sun rays into gorgeous beauty and intoxicating perfume.

Her little young form was grace itself, embodied, her step the poetry of motion, her queenly head crowned with a coronet of lustrous braids, her cheeks wearing the changeful flush of a summer dawn, her eyes brilliant and tender, shy and passionate, reminding one in their dusky beauty of a tropic night.

This was Daisy Doon, the whimsical untidy child, who ran about with tanned skin and unkempt hair, this silent, charming girl, as faultlessly beautiful in her dark splendour as any princess of a royal line.

Lady Ryhope had been very kind to Daisy since grandfather's death.

Daisy's strange beauty attracted her, and she exerted herself to get the girl a place in the house of Lady Stanhope.

Not as a governess—Daisy was not learned enough for that; but as a kind of companion and maid combined.

Daisy had many advantages in Lady Stanhope's house—it was in that aristocratic atmosphere of intelligence and refinement that her wondrous beauty unfolded.

She was a tropic flower, this grand-daughter of Jacob Doon. She needed a clear sky and a genial sun to bring out her glorious beauty.

For eighteen months she lived in Lady Stanhope's family at a good salary, and enjoyed the privilege of going up to London once or twice.

Her salary was liberal, and she saved it all, stinting herself for common garments that she might help Ichabod.

He was living all alone in the old cottage, working at grandfather's cobbler bench and playing his violin under the old maple tree. Poor Ichabod!

From her little savings Daisy bought him a new violin, and the small melodeon, and a good many other gratifications, and she was just planning to send him to London to take lesson of a famous music teacher, when an unexpected circumstance changed the whole current of her life.

Sir George Stanhope, Lady Stanhope's only son, came home from Heidelberg, and was unwise enough to fall in love with Daisy at first sight.

In a week his devotion was patent to the entire household.

Motherlike, Lady Stanhope did not blame her son—she blamed Daisy.

She was an ardent, designing girl, and she must leave Stanhope Hall at once.

Daisy needed no second bidding, for her pride was equal to her beauty. She left in such a hurry as not to receive pay for her last quarter, and Lady Stanhope was forced to send the money after by letter.

And now we find her back again in the little cottage at Ryhope, sitting near the window, the September sunlight falling like gold upon her coronet of auburn hair, as she binds the shoe that Ichabod has just finished.

They still follow the old man's humble occupation, not from any love they bear for it, but because nothing else seems available.

They are very simple and inexperienced, these two orphans, in regard to matters of the world; although they talk day by day of leaving the old cottage and going out into the world to seek their fortunes, they do not attempt it.

Their sensitive natures and the strong power of old association prove even more potent than the yearnings of youthful ambition.

Endowed with fair intellect, and tortured by vain longing for something higher and nobler than their prosy, everyday life, they still cling to the old cottage, and to grandfather's cobbler's bench, as a pair of unfledged robins hang on to the old nest, too timid to let go, though every instinct urges them to fly.

But at times this wearing toil, with its commonplace surroundings, becomes almost unbearable, and poor Daisy, when her passionate heart overflows, will rush away to the forest to shape her vague dreams in its leafy silence, while Ichabod, dropping wax-ends and awls, will fly to his old violin for consolation.

On this September afternoon they seem unusually busy.

Ichabod draws his waxed thread in and out with a swift, determined motion which tells plainly enough that some new hope is at work in his heart.

But Daisy, though she works nimbly, looks sad and discontented; her dusky eyes have a strange, restless expression that makes Jack Turf feel uneasy as he watches her furtively from his seat near the doorway.

Jack is a young midshipman now in the British navy, at home on furlough, and, according to the habit of his life, he has stopped at the little cottage on his way to the village.

But Daisy is in one of her silent moods, and, after a few ordinary remarks, he sits and watches her uneasily, turning over the brown nuts in his pocket.

After a while she finishes the shoe, and throws it into the corner where Ichabod sits.

"There," putting a fresh thread in her needle and pushing back the black braids from her forehead, "I'm ready for the other. Is there anything I can do while you finish it?"

Ichabod, in his abstraction, fails to answer, and Jack speaks.

"No, Daisy," he says, "rest now. You must be tired stitching so incessantly."

Daisy, half-forgetful of his presence, looks up, and meets the tender glance of his brown eyes—a glance that reveals his hidden heart more plainly than words could have done, reveals his great love for this strangely-beautiful girl, his longing desire to take her from her life of toil, and cherish and work for her for ever.

Daisy reads the glance, and a deeper scarlet dyes her brown cheeks, and a gush of tears comes to her eyes.

"I am tired, Jack," she says; "and my head aches, too. How I hate this everlasting stitching!"

"Then don't stitch any more just now. Come out into the fresh air a few minutes—'twill do you good. Ichabod won't finish that shoe for half an hour yet. Come, please, I've some nuts for you."

She follows him out, and they sit down side by side beneath the old maple tree.

"See there," rattling handful after handful of brown nuts into her Holland apron. "Splendid fellows, aren't they? I gathered them o' purpose for you, Daisy."

"Did you, Jack?"

"To be sure I did! Who else in the world have I got to gather nuts for?"

"Oh, I don't know, Jack! I suppose you could find somebody else if you wished too."

"But I don't wish to, Daisy."

She makes no answer, and they sit silent, he twisting off the late clover blooms, and tearing them in pieces.

Presently he says, speaking with a kind of choking hesitation:

"Look here, Daisy, don't you want—I mean, do you object—confound it, I can't find words—is it unpleasant to you for me to bring you nuts and flowers and drop in to see you in the evening? Tell me, Daisy?"

"Why no, Jack; what makes you ask?"

"Because I want to know, that's all."

Something in his voice touches the girl's heart, and she puts out her hand impulsively.

"No, Jack, I'm always glad to see you. You're the best, kindest friend I ever had, or ever shall have, I fancy."

He clasps the slender brown fingers in his broad palm, and tears rise to his brown eyes.

"I trust I shall always be worthy to be your friend, Daisy," he says. "I shall try hard to be, at any rate."

Sitting beside him in the autumn sunlight, Daisy is inclined to make his heart her own—his love her blessing, her support, her refuge. Surely it would be all-sufficient. Yet she feels a discontented longing for something more—wealth, distinction, fame. Other women have won these things, why should not she? Poor Daisy, those few brief months amid the glitter of Lady Stanhope's splendid establishment have done their work. If Lady Stanhope's only son admired her, and wished to make her his wife, might not some other noble peer do the same thing?

These desultory fancies are put to flight by the trim little figure of Miss Lottie Lovel.

Jack rises to his feet with a heavy sigh.

"You see me almost run to death," she begins, sitting down on the roots of the oak, and fanning herself vigorously with her bonnet. "I don't get time to eat or sleep. You've heard about the great fête, of course? Haven't? Why, dear heart, Ryhope ain't a thinking o' nothing else! It's to be in honour o' Lady Ryhope's weddin' and everybody high an' low is invited. Kind o' Lord Raeburn, but it don't seem right, an' poor Sir Roger's death so recent. I don't see how Lady Ryhope can do it, but it's no concern o' mine what she does."

"What does May say about it?" asked Daisy.

"Why, she's near crazy—cries day and night; she thought so much of her father, poor thing. She's angry at her mother for marryin'. Eustace don't mind, they say. The new housekeeper appears to be a civil kind o' person, but I don't feel by her as I did by Mrs. Murdoch. She showed me the big cake, like a great hoghead's bottom; and there's to be no end of victuals and wine; and they're goin' to light up and have music a playin' all the time. It's to be the grandest thing that ever took place in Ryhope."

"When does it come off, Miss Lottie?" asked Jack.

"The second o' October."

"That's lucky, I'll get a chance to see it; I don't sail till the sixth," he said, glancing toward Daisy.

But her eyes were bent upon the distant sky, with a dreamy, abstracted gaze, and her fingers played idly with the brown nuts that filled her apron.

"Bless my heart," exclaimed Lottie, "tis a most dark, I must hurry home, I've a hard night's work afore me. I jest run by, between lights to talk a bit, and see if you want anything, Daisy. What are you goin' to wear?"

Daisy woke from her reverie with a start, and a vivid blush that puzzled poor Jack sorely.

"Whad did you say, Miss Lottie?"

"I asked what you mean to wear at the Ryhope merrymaking, you know?"

"Oh, I don't expect to go. They haven't invited me, or Ichabod," the old girl's fire coming back to her great black eyes.

"Oh, nonsense, the whole country's invited, ne one will have a special invitation, but, for that matter,



[DAISY'S DANGER.]

Lady May's comin' down to-morrow, she said so, to tell you all about it."

"Well, I'm pleased she didn't forget us, but I shall not go, I've no clothes."

"Can't some o' your old dresses be renewed?"

Daisy makes a gesture of disgust.

"No, my dresses are all worn out."

"Buy a new one then, I won't charge for the making."

"I've no money to spare; but it doesn't matter, I'd as soon stay at home," said Daisy, but the tears rise in her eyes, belying the truth of what she speaks.

Jack's bronzed face glows with the light of a sudden thought. He nods and smiles significantly at the little milliner. She comprehends, and the cloud that was gathering on her sunny face clears off in an instant.

"Well, well," she says, "We'll manage somehow. I'll be down agin to-morrow. Good-bye," and away she flutters, as gay and light-hearted as a summer butterfly.

Jack follows her example, impatient to be at home, and confer with his mother concerning his intended project; and Daisy is left alone, sitting on the roots of the old maple tree.

Daisy's reflections are sad. Looking out at the distant sky, up whose purple steep the autumn moon was climbing, poor Daisy pondered thus, unconscious of anything like self-love in her repining. Why not change this bitter lot, and secure for herself the life, the luxuries she coveted? She might! Lady Stanhope's son and heir only needed her consent to be at her side before another sunset. In her shabby little trunk lay a package of his passionate letters.

And there was some one else, too, who was eager to obtain her favour. Why should she not take advantage of these rare chances? Her dusky cheeks flushed, her eyes blazed. For one moment Ichabod, Jack, all the tender ties that bound her to her old life were forgotten; she thought only of herself.

Just then, as if some wicked fate directed him, Sir Eustace Ryhope, the young heir of Ryhope Manor, came strolling down the little zigzag path, cutting off the clover heads with his ebony cane. The sight of him appears to deepen the vivid bloom on Daisy's cheeks, as she rises to her feet, fluttering and embarrassed.

"No, no," he protested, catching her hand and releasing her, with the freedom of an old friend; "don't ask me in the house; I'm sick of close rooms and glaring lights; let me sit here in this cool silence."

Daisy obeys with shy embarrassment. She is somewhat diffident in the presence of the young

baronet, who has only made her acquaintance afresh since his return from abroad.

"Now," he says, seating himself beside her, and bending his head till his fair, curling locks almost touched her glowing cheeks, "tell me what you were dreaming when I came here. You sat as still as a statue, and tears, by Jove! there are tears on your cheeks. They look like roses bathed in dew. What's all this about? I must know, Daisy."

"Must know," she repeats, with a flash that makes her dusky eyes bewildering. "That's imperative. Perhaps I shall not see fit to tell you."

Sir Eustace looks at her in amaze, his gray eyes kindling.

"Heavens!" he ejaculates under his breath, "I can't believe my eyes. What a wild thing she was—and now? By Jove! there's not such another face in England."

Her wilful temper seems to please him.

He is so accustomed to meek, obliging women, who droop their eyes and smile assent to all he says that they have grown flat and insipid.

But this wild Daisy, with her fearless, fascinating gaze, has charmed him from the first hour of their meeting. Consequently he spares no pains in cultivating her acquaintance, not with any definite object in view, but solely for his own gratification.

That seems to be the one impelling motive of Sir Eustace Ryhope's life.

Whatever pleases him he must possess, and once in his possession the most valuable treasure is soon uncared for.

He has made up his mind from the first that this strange, beautiful Daisy must be his.

And what then? Eustace Ryhope did not think nor care. Let to-morrow take care of to-morrow.

Of course he could not make her Lady Ryhope—a poor girl, who sold flowers and bound shoes for a livelihood. He half-wished she was rich and noble.

The bare thought of Lady Mary Thorndike, whom his mother had chosen for his future wife made him ill.

A bit of a doll, with pink cheeks and flaxen curls; but she had a princely dowry and was of very noble birth.

The September moon soars higher and higher up the purple steep, dimly revealing Daisy's perfect form and queenly head, with its heavy coils of hair.

The young man looks down upon her with rapturous eyes.

"Now, now, Daisy," he continues, in reply to her somewhat spiteful answer, "what have I done to deserve such treatment at your hands? We used to be old playfellows years ago."

She utters an impatient "Pshaw!" and rises to her feet, but he catches her hand and holds her firmly.

"Not until you have told me how I have offended you," he says, decidedly.

Daisy likes to be ruled; under all her show of independence and self-will, her nature is yielding and pliant, subject to the training of almost any skillful hand.

Perhaps Eustace Ryhope divines this, for he does not relax his hold, though she struggles to get free.

"Oh, Sir Eustace," she says at last, half in anger, half in fun, "what's the use of such foolery? You know you've not offended me."

"That what makes you so cross to me?"

"Oh, I'm not cross; only tired and out of spirits. I've been hard at work all day, and yet another shoe to bind to-night."

"Confound the shoes!"

"So say I," she cries, her wondrous eyes lighting as she laughs; "yet they bring one bread and butter and that is indispensable."

"It would be strange if a girl like you could not get her bread and butter without binding shoes," says the baronet, dryly.

"I see no other alternative, Sir Eustace."

"I do, then," he replies, impressively, his eyes full of significant admiration. "Instead of wearing out your youth and beauty in this vulgar drudgery that you despise you might have leisure, wealth, elegance—and, better than all, Daisy, love!"

His thrilling voice makes her flush and tremble.

"I can't see how it could be," she answered, softly.

"Daisy," he cries, impetuously, "does not your own heart tell you?"

He clasps her unresisting hand, and bends over her till his fair curls brush her glowing cheek.

"Daisy," he murmurs, "I love you!"

She bounds to her feet as the words escape his lips, wrothing her hand from his clasp.

"How dare you?" she cries, indignantly. "How dare you speak such words to me?"

"Love dares all things, Daisy," he replies, serenely. "But you do not care for me?"

"No, I don't, or ever shall!" she returns, with angry vehemence.

"Then I'll not trouble you with my company any longer. I beg your pardon—good night, Daisy!"

He walks away with a doleful face, and Daisy, gazing after him through rising tears, half-regrets what she has done.

Poor, foolish Daisy!

(To be continued.)



[THE YELLOW MONSTER.]

SHIFTING SANDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Elgiva; or, the Gipsy's Curse," "The Snapt Link," "The Lost Coronet," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VI.

Woman's rage, like shallow water,
Does but show their heedless nature;
When the stream seems rough and frowning
There is still less fear of drowning.

THERE was a strange, constrained silence for a few moments as Netta Carew stood facing the pair she had thus surprised in their sympathetic parting.

Cora stood with her proud, stag-like attitude, her graceful head drawn up defiantly at the very suspicion of shame or disgrace.

Lord Belfort, after the first sudden shock, recovered his usual careless insouciance.

"Hiding! Sweet Netta, that is a cool charge. I must say, when it properly belongs to your saucy self. Here was I drawn on the wings of morning to the place where I felt certain you would be found. And instead of her I sought I only find a fair substitute. Who is the fugitive now, I should like to know?" he added, gallily, while a furtive glance of his eyes signalled Cora to vanish from the scene.

Netta's lips did not relax from their angry, pouting contempt as she replied:

"A substitute who serves admirably well as it seems. I am sorry I interrupted the interesting interview," she added, scornfully.

Ernest laughed contemptuously.

"My dear little cousin, you must be fearfully absurd to take a trifle so seriously. It was a mere trifling of the time till you appeared. What can it signify where a mere dependent is on the tapis? Netta Carew is too gifted and lovely to stoop to such unworthy jealousies of an inferior."

The lovely face did somewhat relax, though she replied with an averted face and bitter contempt of tone.

"Then it should be beneath you to stoop to such a degrading deceit, Ernest," she said, coldly. "But I suppose you consider me as a mere child, who may be cajoled at pleasure."

"On the contrary, I think you are a remarkably exacting—what shall I say?—woman," he returned, calmly.

"I am much obliged to you," she said, as she dropped him a mock courtesy. "I have no wish to be a woman before I am sixteen; that would make me a fearfully old at thirty. But at any rate I am not a child, nor a simpleton," she went on, angrily. "And I know pretty well you would not make love

to a strange nobody of a girl like that if—if—that is—"

She paused from embarrassment and perhaps the passions that well nigh choked her very utterance. Lord Belfort laughed gallily.

"My dear, spoiled, wayward little cousin, you really are deliciously amusing," he said, trying to take her hand in his. "I suppose you mean to convey to my dull comprehension that it is a proof that I am not in love with fair Netta Carew because I employed a spare minute in nonsensical nothings to Netta's humble companion. Did you never hear the old proverb, 'Love me, love my dog,' sweet cousin? Is it not credible that I may wish to enlist all influences around you in my favour till I can hope to fulfil my higher hopes?"

"I don't care one bit what that presuming girl thinks; it would have no influence with me, except just for the contrary opinion," she returned, pettishly. "You don't know who she really is or you would not talk such folly, Ernest."

"Folly is more amusing than sound sense sometimes. But perhaps you will enlighten me on the subject, Netta?" he said, with an audacity that only a handsome person and thirty thousand a year could excuse.

"You don't deserve it; but it's not worth keeping a secret," she said, carelessly. "Cora is merely a girl papa picked up because she spoke only French, and I was idle enough to decline any such trouble. I don't believe she ever had a father and mother," she added, bitterly, "and, like all these stray creatures, dropped from the clouds nobody knows how or why."

"That is Heaven-born," he said, gravely.

"You are intolerable, my lord," she said, angrily, moving from the place. "I will tell Lady Emily you are here, and you will perhaps ask her what you wish to learn about this nameless creature you think so charming."

"You are most delightfully flattering, more bewitching than I expected," said the young nobleman, coolly detaining her. "I scarcely hoped you would have remembered me so sweetly and humoured my whims and fancies with such piquant sharpness. But, come, we have had enough of all this nonsense," he went on, more seriously. "You ought to know your own importance better by this time, Netta, than to bestow a thought on such an absurd trifle. Mr. Carew's lovely heiress need not fear any rival, certainly not her own."

"Waiting-maid, for she is little better," interposed Netta, lighting up at the sweet allusion to her charms. "But then Lord Belfort should know better than to make her vain and presuming," she went on, more archly. "So, I suppose, we had

better exchange forgiveness and be friends, Ernest, that is, if you will never do so no more, as we used to say."

Lord Belfort was more daring in this case than the former reconciliation he had effected within the last few minutes, for he touched the lips instead of the hand of his young relative, and of course received a pretty feminine punishment from her ivory fingers as his reward.

Meanwhile the innocent cause of the fracas had hastily passed from the house, and glided rapidly along the shaded paths to the more secluded part of the grounds, called the Pleasance, to distinguish it from the more cultivated terraces and walks of the carefully kept domains.

She hated the constraint imposed by the artificial character of the elaborate productions of the gardener's art, and, like a free child of nature, flew for refuge to the simpler, refreshing region, where she could breathe undisturbed.

"This is intolerable! I will not endure it!" she said, angrily venting her charged heart in words. "To be insulted thus by a stranger, and because I am obscure and alone. Oh, Heaven, what will become of me!" she went on, clasping her hands and sinking into a seat in the rustic summer-house rarely frequented save by herself. "Oh, why was I not drowned with those who would have protected me and loved me? Now I am desolate, miserable!"

"And who is it who ought to have loved you, Cora?" said Sibbald Carew, who had entered unperceived. "Surely you have no cause to complain that you are not—I mean there is no want of affection shown to you, at least by me?"

"No, no, I did not—I do not complain," she said, hurriedly, "except," she added, half bitterly, "when I am watched and overheard."

"Nay, I saw your dress flitting through the shrubs and I so seldom am alone with you that I wished to speak in unrestrained and freedom," he returned, seating himself by her. "Where is Netta?"

"I left her just now with Lord Belfort, I believe is his name," she said, coldly, though she half regretted her ingratitude to her benefactor. "I dare say you will find him there now, sir—in the school-room," she added, as if fearing the direction would be insufficient to induce his departure.

"In the schoolroom," he repeated, "then you saw him, Cora?"

"Yes, but I did not know or I would have left the room before he arrived," she replied, deprecatingly. "He came to find Miss Carew."

"And did you think him handsome and attractive?" he said, with a constrained smile.

"I do not know. It is of no consequence to me," she returned, haughtily, still shrinking back in her seat from her partner's inquiring gaze.

"Is it so, Cora? Then you are unlike young maidens usually," he said; "they are alive to such attributes in our sex."

"Yes, I am unlike, very unlike," she returned, bitterly, "and it grieves me to remember it."

"Cora, why will you pain me by speaking thus?" said Sibbald, trying to look into her averted eyes, in which indignant tears were gathering. "Is it not enough that I consider you as my own charge—my ward if you will? What would you have? You seemed but now to wish to send me from you. It is not what my feelings at least deserve, whatever my actions may have been, my Cora."

"Why, so I am grateful. Only please leave me in peace and freedom," she said, impatiently. "It is wrong, very wrong, I know," she went on, in a softer tone, that gave new charm to her varying beauty; "but I am sadly wayward and uncontrollable, as a stray wail in the world must be. It makes me bitter, unjust, when it comes on me as it does sometimes."

"Did you feel it to Rupert?" he asked, in a subdued tone. "Were you so to him?"

She started back angrily.

"Do not speak of him, unless you would drive me wild," she said. "You promised, and I will not endure it."

"But I only desire to fill his place, and that you should feel as safe in my care as his," persisted Sibbald.

She shook her head.

"No, no, it is impossible; he loved me—spoke Rupert."

"And do you—"

He stopped.

A flood of flame came over his white face to the very roots of his still abundant hair.

Then he collected himself and went on, in a low, meaning voice:

"And I love you, Cora."

He watched her face as he spoke slowly and deliberately, to see the effect that the words produced.

It was but an impatient scorn, as if she could but be tantalized with such affection as she alone dreamed of from him.

"You are very good to say so, but of course you cannot, except from kindness and pity," she said.

"If I were your daughter it would be different—but now—"

She gave an impatient gesture that flung away the hand he had taken in his.

"I see, I see," he exclaimed, angrily; "you reject—you despise the affection that has been proved by actions; you are dazzled, infatuated by the mere accident of youth. And you will anser for your vain folly," he went on, with a contemptuous laugh, "and I, perhaps, for mine."

She looked up in a kind of sorrowing bewilderment that had nothing of confusion nor of resentment in its sadness.

"I will go away," she said, simply, "if you repent your generous kindness. I will relieve you of all burden from poor Cora, who was born as it seems only for the injury and pain of all who take pity on her. And I am better able to maintain myself now," she said, more proudly, "thanks to your bounty and kindness. I have more knowledge—more means of gaining a livelihood."

Cora could not comprehend the workings of those fine features—the strong clasp of the entwined fingers, in which a whole tempest of agitation was both vented and suppressed.

She only believed he was weighing her proposal and contending between duty and inclination in acceding to it.

"It will be best," she pleaded, more earnestly. "I see you feel it a cruel embarrassment. Let me go, dear friend."

The tone in which the last words were pronounced unlocked the torrent of the passion within.

"Now," he exclaimed, vehemently, "never! I cannot part with you. Cora, you are the sole joy of my barren existence—the sunbeam of my cold, dreary house. If you believe you owe me one shadow of kindness, stay; you must not—you dare not leave me," he went on, with a touch of fierceness in his tone and manner that fairly bewildered the astonished girl.

"As you will," she replied, submissively. "So long as I can do you good I have promised to accept your care and bounty. Till I am forced to go I will not break my word."

He bowed coldly as if just recovering from a gust of uncontrolled emotion, that was rather a fever fit of delirium than a sign of permanent passion.

"It is well," he said. "I could not pardon myself if I neglected the charge I undertook. Till you are placed under more permanent protection and control you are bound to me and I to you. Let me hear no more of this—it irritates and annoys me."

And, without another word or look, he turned from

the spot, leaving Cora in a state of hopeless suspicion and bewilderment, that as yet did not catch one clue, grasp one key to the perplexing mystery of Sibbald Carew's capricious but unmistakable agitation.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the pleasures which mirth can afford,

The revel, the laugh, and the jeer,

The best is a plentiful board.

But the guests are all mute at their

pitiful cheer,

And none but the worm is a reveller here.

CAREW MANOR was in a tumult of joyful and brilliant bustle.

The birthday of its heiress was at hand. It was to be celebrated by a splendid ball, albeit Netta was two years younger than the orthodox eighteen when such festivities are deemed according to rule and order among those of high station and wealth. But Lord Belfort had caught at a half-despairing wish thrown out by his young cousin, and by dint of argument, persuasions, and almost threats, had carried the point both with Lady Emily and the more indifferent and careless father of the heiress.

All were engrossed with the preparations and the excitement, from the highest to the lowest of the household, all save two—the master of the manor and his founding ward.

Cora sat in her quiet seclusion, poring over her books, or pouring out her rich voice in words of sweetness, or what was even more entirely her genius, bringing out wondrous melody from the strings of the instrument she had already learned to master with an almost unconscious power. What was it to her if the reception-rooms were being decorated with a profusion of costly adornments, or that Netta was the very prey of modistes in the bewildering choice of her dresses; while Lady Emily resented from their long resting-place the simplest jewels which would be selected from the rich stores of the deceased Mrs. Carew?

She had no part in it, none. She could not even expect to catch a glimpse of the brilliant scene, nor would she if she could have stolen into its saloons in the humble attire and the despised position of the dependent of the heroine of the fête.

Yet it was hard.

She was more beautiful even than Netta, and her year or so of eldership only made it more bitter that her dawn of womanhood should be denied its natural sunshine and brilliancy.

Perhaps it was such thoughts that gave a dreary pensiveness to the melody she half-musically drew from the magnificent piano which graced the spoiled Netta's schoolroom, and made it rather like the wail of an Eolian harp.

She looked like a muse as she bent gracefully over the keys, with her long lashes drooping on her cheek, and her lips slightly parted, in the deep thoughtfulness that ill became such youthful features.

So thought Lord Belfort as he passed for a few minutes to listen and to gaze.

"You have indeed a passion for music to prefer it to the gaiety that is turning all our heads," Miss St. Croix, he said, as she came to a close.

"Yes, I love it. I have little else to give me so much pleasure," she replied, more gently than she often replied to the young nobleman's lively, jesting compliments and comments.

In truth Cora felt so utterly desolate that it had some charm to feel that some one thought of her with interest amid the bewildering whirl of that festive time.

"Do you not care for dancing then?" he asked.

"Surely at your age it must be a passion."

"I do not know—I have never tried it, except at a lesson," she said, coolly.

"But you soon will," he urged.

Cora shook her head.

"You do not mean that you are not to be present at the ball?" he exclaimed, indignantly.

"Certainly I do," she replied, quietly.

"You will," he retorted, firmly. "I would never have enjoyed the old folks into the scheme but for you. I know Netta is far too much a child for such a business, but with you it is different. And I longed to see you shine out among the county damsels in your own rare, picturesque beauty, Cora," he said, half-musically using her Christian name. "You need not fear; you shall be there."

She smiled half scornfully.

"In my schoolroom costume, perhaps, as a foil—a waiting-maid for Miss Carew? No, my lord, you are kind to dream of such an impossibility, but it cannot be. Do not speak of it, please. I should only have fresh mortification."

He laughed again.

"Oh, yes, I comprehend it all, and will thwart the intentions of my haughty little cousin and her chaplains. Do not fear, Miss St. Croix, I am not such a bungler as to darken your slavery instead of gliding it by a few beams of gaiety and joy."

But promise me to comply, if you have the signal, and you shall not repent."

And he sprang from the low window, before Cora had time to reply, and disappeared among the thick plantations beneath.

The girl knew his power with the aunt and niece she had watched with much scorn their mingled tyranny and homage to the rich party, and she felt little surprise when Lady Emily issued a cold, brief desire that she was to appear on the eventful evening.

"It will perhaps be better, since Miss Carew is so very young, that a sort of element of school life should be near her," she said. "It will serve to confirm the character of the occasion, a more temporary peep into the world, not a coming into its full blaze."

Cora gave her usual proudly-submissive assent. "As to your dress," continued the lady, in the same dry tone, "you can wear a white muslin. It need not have any trimming or ornaments of course, only one of Miss Carew's sashes, and perhaps a bow or bit of lace; that you can manage for yourself. No one will have any time to attend to you, I'm sure, and I never supposed you would have hoped to appear at all on such an occasion."

Cora's head was averted and Lady Emily could not read the scornful expression of the young face or she might have perhaps resented at once her permission and offer.

But in her sublime self-satisfaction the lady never even troubled herself to note the frowning features, scarcely to pause for an assurance that her words were understood, as she sailed majestically from the room to the more congenial and important scenes of action.

She had promised submission—poor Cora—to the patron from whom she had received largesse and protection. She had tacitly assented to accept the boon procured for her by Lord Belfort. And with a wayward pride that had perhaps little of humble obedience in it she inwardly determined to yield, and it might be conquer in yielding—mortify by her own humiliation and abasement.

Slowly and proudly she entered her bed-chamber on the eventful night, after sickening hours of doubt and parleying and caprice on the part of the heiress of Carew.

But it was over at last. Netta and her maids were safely closeted in the luxurious dressing-room of the petted girl. And Cora was free to repair to her small chamber and don her white muslin at her leisure.

She paused for a minute or so at the door.

Fresh from a contemplation of Netta's white satin, pearls and lace, the second-hand white muslin presented little temptation for a speedy toilet.

But at last she turned the handle of the lock and entered the room where the simple but kind school-room maid was awaiting her with a smile of triumph on her features.

"Look here, Miss Cora," she said, "is not this lovely? and it will suit you, I think."

The girl could scarcely speak for the instant, as her eyes fell on the astounding display that met her view.

It was a costume of the pale amber tint so becoming to brunettes as clear and colourless as Cora, with black lace to tone down its glitter—one that might have befitted a duke's daughter.

A parure of costly cameos for neck and arms, and a headed arrow for the coils of the dark, satiny hair, that needed no ornament save its own wealth, completed the exquisite toilet, which actually suspended the very breath of the bewildered founding.

"Susan, what is all this? Has Lady Emily—oh, dear, how very kind!" burst from her lips, the young nature for once asserting its power through the weight of sorrow and subdued pride that had crushed it to the very earth.

"Lady Emily? Oh, no, miss, it's nothing to do with her, I'm certain," said the girl, with a decided tone that might have brought a suspicion of her superior knowledge to Cora's mind had she been less preoccupied with the extreme beauty of her possessions. "And what makes it more sure is that it came in a box directed to you, Miss Cora—from London, I expect, and my lady had given me strict orders before not on any account to take any of Miss Carew's things for you unless she had quite left them off, you see."

Cora was briefly musing over the mystery while the maid spoke, but she soon checked her own speculations, with a cold smile at her own folly.

Of course it was Mr. Carew who had contrived to evade his sister's jealous dictum in this unanswerable manner, and to save her from the intended mortification, without a chance of interference or censure.

"Of course you will wear it, miss," purined Susan, anxiously. "I've been looking at it, and I think it will just fit you—though how they could have managed it I'm sure it's not in my power to say."

It would have been an unnatural strain on the philosophy of one so young to have left such an irreproachable toilet lying neglected on the couch and chairs where it lay.

And Cora, with a thrill of grateful pleasure, at once prepared to don the elegant ball-dress—more elegant than she could scarcely have imagined in her wildest dreams of taste and beauty.

The splendid tresses were tightly coiled round the small head, and fastened with the classical pins that linked so well the coiffure.

The delicate, fairylike robe was donned, the necklaces and bracelets clasped, and then she surveyed herself, with a half-wondering smile at her own fair vision, in the long looking-glass.

She scarcely recognized the cottage-girl of Boulogne. The simply attired dependant of Carew Manor was transformed into a beauty of the highest type of loveliness and fashion.

There were even gloves of the most delicate colour and embroidered handkerchief to complete the graceful, irreproachable costume, and Susan gave vent to the most rapturous expressions of delight at the result of her labours.

"Well, I must say I never did see any one look nicer, Miss Cora," she finished off with as she opened the door for the beautiful debutante. "And Miss Netta won't beat you, not in all her satin and jewels and pride," she added, indignantly, as she left the room. "And, what's more, I'd have cut my tongue out before I'd have let out my secret, let alone the golden guinea that I got for keeping it."

Meanwhile Cora took her way to the ball-room, already sufficiently flattered to give confidence to the most timid.

And the girl—familiar with the windings and passages—stole into the apartment by a side door that was little seen or observed.

For some minutes the dazzling scene prevented her distinguishing aught save a bewildering glitter of jewels and dresses, or hearing aught save the band that persisted in profaning some of Cora's most favourite airs by their "mélanges."

But as she grew accustomed to the place she began to recognize some of the figures sitting before her.

There was Netta dancing with Lord Belfort, with a flash of triumph upon her fair cheeks. There was Sibbald Carew talking to one of the county magnates with eyes uneasily fixed on the door, and a restless trouble in his fine face.

And, besides these well-known faces, her attention was attracted by a tall girl by whom she had, in her shy haste, seated herself, and whose decided though not unfeminine features and highbred, independent air caught her confidence and admiration. Cora was not mistaken in believing herself an object of curiosity to this stranger, whose eyes were turned inquiringly on her, and she at length unmistakably proved the fact by decidedly changing her attitude and confronting Cora's half-averted face. She prepared to address the stranger inmate of the mansion.

CHAPTER VII.

What though not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights
Of envied life, though only few possess
Nature's treasures, or imperial state;
Yet Nature's care is to all her children just.

"It seems we are either accidentally or intentionally sympathetic," she said, in a clear, decided voice, that had nothing of shyness or hesitation in it. "I mean that we are about the only damsels in the room with tolerable toilets and tournure who are sitting down. We ought to be friends."

Cora could not forbear a smile, though the ever-present idea of her position clouded the natural response to the abrupt address.

"I do not suppose it is from the same reason," she said, with a half-shy pride. "I have not been asked to dance. Most likely you prefer sitting still."

"You are an extremely modest and candid creature, which I suppose you can afford to be," said the stranger, glancing with evident admiration at the whole appearance of the lovely young girl. "And for once perhaps you are wrong in your guess. The fact is I never dance quadrilles, I would as soon move on stilts. I only tolerate circular dances—do you?"

"It is the first dance I ever saw," said Cora. "I do not know what I like."

"Ah, your debut; how I envy you!" continued the elder girl. "It must seem a fairy scene."

"Yes, and about as shadowy," returned Cora.

"Excellent! We shall be great friends, I can see. Pray where have you been hidden all these years? I thought I knew all the schoolrooms as well as the saloons for fifteen miles round, and could have safely predicted their contributions to the superior regions."

A hot flush dyed Cora's pale cheek for a brief moment as she replied:

"It is not likely you should have heard of me. I

am but a dependant in this house, a stranger, of whom Mr. Carew has kindly taken the charge, and I try to return his kindness as a companion to Miss Carew."

The stranger shrugged her elegant shoulders with an unmistakable gesture of disgust and sympathy.

"Quite a mistake, depend upon it. However, I shall not allow you to return to your schoolroom. You shall come to Biddulph Park, without controversy or refusal."

Cora had not time to express thanks or dissent, when the music stopped, a gentleman hastily advanced to her companion; he addressed her as "Lady Marian," and led her off to the waltz, which was being rapidly arranged, and at the same instant Lord Belfort came to Cora with a triumphant smile.

"You are going to dance with me. I have earned the right, I do not even ask it," he added, laughingly. "You are the captive of my bow and spear—come."

Cora could not refuse. Certainly she scarcely wished it when the inspiring music was sounding in her ears, and the contagious example of the throng inviting her to share the waltz.

And the next moment she was one of that giddy round, with Ernest's strong arm encircling her, and his steady step supporting hers.

It was a delicious feeling, that animating dance, with all the concomitants of light and music, and her elegant dress had such refinement, such novelty, that she might be excused if she forgot the past—even Rupert—for the moment, and gave herself up to the enchantment of the scene.

There were whispers of admiration and questions as the lovely stranger moved round in the company of the most distinguished partner in the room. And there were obvious and bitter feelings in the hearts of many others besides Cora who were watching her every movement.

She knew that Lady Emily would treasure up a whole avalanche of wrath; she was prepared for Netta's taunts and insults.

But she knew not that through the open windows, which had been left unshaded to admit the cool summer air, there was a figure standing with frowning brow and head bent forward to ensure the view of that fair young creature.

There was despair painted on his dark features, bitter, resentful agony in his expressive eyes, as Rupert Falconer gazed at the brilliant form of her he loved.

He saw her slender waist encircled by the arm of the handsome stranger; he saw her hand in his; he marked the upturned face that was replying to some remark of her partner with a half-shy smile.

Never had he realized her beauty as he did then, set off as it was with all the adjuncts of art, but he never thought it possible that Cora, his foundling, his beloved, could have stirred up such deep resentment—ay, and scorn in his breast.

"Ingrate," he murmured, "ingrate! I will visit this on the heads of those who tempted her, if I pardon her faithlessness for the sake of her youth, her weakness. But Rupert Falconer will not wash that polluted hand nor hold that form to his heart more, unless—unless he is avenged, and she in humiliation at his feet. I swear it by the love I once bore to her, my—own, no, no, no, his—Cora, the villain, the perjured villain!"

He lingered still, as if to drain his cup of agony to the dregs, though each moment increased the chance of discovery and punishment. But at length the music stopped and the couples began to saunter up and down the saloon, and Cora and her companion drew near to the welcome freshness of the open window near which he stood.

"You are enjoying it, dear Cora?" murmured the soft voice of Ernest Belfort, bending down to the very face of the fair girl at his side.

"Oh, yes, so much, so very much!" she said. "It is best, is it not, while one may?"

"But for you it is but a beginning," returned the young nobleman. "You have a gay, bright life before you, dear Cora, if I can at all influence your destiny. And Netta shall not find she can torment with impunity one whom I—"

Rupert did not hear the last word for a noise near him forced him to draw back in his hiding-place, and when he once more ventured forth they were gone from the spot where they had been standing. Rupert's eyes literally glared into the dazzling light of the thronged room, but neither Cora nor her companion was to be seen.

His heated fancy pictured to himself the possible causes of their departure.

Perhaps that hated villain was whispering words of tenderness in the shade of the lovely conservatory, with its soft green curtains, and its brilliant floral display of exotics and native flowers, that would match Cora's deepened bloom as she listened.

Or, on the tempting couch of some secluded room, the bold lover of the foundling, of his own, his Cora, might venture to claim his right to a caress, for

which Rupert felt he would have given years of his life.

The idea was maddening, and the young man gnashed his teeth in very agony, and then sprang away from the place as if a fiend was pursuing his footsteps.

And far, far away from her whose true heart would have spurned the splendour that surrounded her and the flatteries poured in her ears for one look, one word from him she loved with a true and earnest maiden affection, which is never felt but once in a woman's life.

"Where is Cora?" asked Mr. Carew, as their waltz ended, and his daughter stood for a minute or so near the spot where he had just entered from the adjoining saloons.

"I really do not know, papa," said Netta, with abrupt annoyance in her voice that contradicted her words. "She was dancing with Lord Belfort, I believe. It was very good of him, I am sure, to be so condescending."

Her father made no reply, and if the girl marked his sudden look of anger, she would have supposed it only indicated his disapproval of such superfluous attentions to the obscure stranger.

But Sibbald only waited till the guests were again busy in forming another set to steal from the place and glide, half unperceived, through the apartments, till he reached a small and little-frequented room, that had been the boudoir of his late wife, and now scarcely opened save for a crowd like the present.

His step was more hurried and his eyes keener and brighter as he went on in his unsuccessful search.

And when at last he reached the half-opened door of the octagon room, and his sharp senses detected, both by sight and hearing, the objects of his pursuit, he paused for an instant to regain his self-control and restrain any other outburst of rage.

Yes, they were there, and Ernest's voice was speaking at the instant in tones of deep interest.

"It is impossible," were the first words that met Sibbald's ears. "Everything about you contradicts such an idea. You are no plebeian, Cora. There are high blood and breeding in every line of your face and form—every tone, every word that speaks the character within. No, it is needless to attempt that as a plea. You are Heaven-descended, and as such far superior to us commonplace mortals," he went on, smiling, as she shook her head with a pretty, reproving gravity.

"It can make no difference to you, my lord, at least," she replied, with the haughty, princess-air she could assume at pleasure. "Miss Carew's ideas and yours would be quite different in that respect, and of course her wishes must be consulted, as my superior, my mistress."

"Superior in what?" began Ernest, hotly, when Sibbald suddenly stood before him.

"Excuse me, Lord Belfort, but it would be contrary to my honour to listen to such flattering estimates of my daughter, however loose your code in such matters may be," he said, with a dark, stern look that withered Cora to the very heart's core.

"Am I to take that as an insult?" returned the young nobleman, hotly, "if so, Mr. Carew, even our near connection cannot prevent me from resenting it as a gentleman should."

"And I, in my turn, am not inclined to see my only child and heiress despised and neglected by her destined husband," returned Sibbald, sternly. "Cora, leave us," he continued, turning to the young girl, who stood pale and terrified at the altercation thus suddenly provoked, "this is no fitting subject for your ears. Go, I will join you presently and inform you of my pleasure."

The girl glided away, chilled and timid at the unwonted sternness of her guardian's manner, and the gentlemen were alone.

"Now, my lord," resumed Sibbald, "let us understand each other. What does all this implied treachery mean? Is it a mere heartless trifling with a helpless and inexperienced girl, or do you mean deliberate perjury to the engagement made for you to my daughter, my fair and only child?"

Lord Belfort, with all his cool self-possession, did certainly flinch a little under the cold, keen bitterness of the elder man's tone, but he quickly shook off the momentary embarrassment.

"I was not aware that any bond existed between me and Miss Carew except the implied if not actually expressed wish of my father that I should choose her for my future wife when she was of a suitable age," he returned. "And I can tell you this much, Mr. Carew, that if I believed for one moment that such a vague idea was considered as a betrothal, I would never come near your house more. Netta is beautiful and rich, but I am not to be dragged into matrimony with an iron chain, no, nor one of silk either."

"Perhaps you would prefer a more free and graceful connection, Lord Belfort," said Sibbald, bitterly. "My unfortunate protégée has perhaps

attracted your lawless passion, and I shall know how to ward off such danger, if my suspicion is true."

Ernest gazed at the flushed face, the hot, fiery passion of the man, whom he had in his youthful impetuosity considered as a kind of antediluvian, and a scornful laugh burst from his lips.

"This is too amusing," he said. "I might almost believe in the absurdity that I had my venerable uncle as a rival, only that is almost too monstrous an idea to swallow at a gulp."

The words had scarcely escaped his lips ere Sibbald's hand was raised and a sharp blow hurled on to Ernest's cheek.

(To be continued).

EDITH LYLE'S SECRET.

By the Author of "Daisy Thornton," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXI.

MISS CHRISTINE ROSSITER, aged forty-six, Miss Alice Creighton, aged seventeen, Miss Julia Schuyler, aged sixteen, and Miss Emma, aged fourteen. These were the ladies who, a good portion of the year, were domesticated at Schuyler Hill, and of whom I will speak in order, and first of Miss Rossiter, whose personal appearance and peculiarities Godfrey had of course exaggerated when he talked of her to Edith.

She was his mother's sister and forty-six, and had once been engaged to a young man who left her all his money, and for whom she wore black half a dozen years, during which time she gave herself to the church, and went so far as to think of hiding her grief in a convent.

But she recovered from that, and being good-looking and only thirty, with a large fortune, she went back to the world again, and became a belle, for she was a handsome woman then, and at times exceedingly brilliant and witty, the result, it was whispered at last, of opium-eating in secret. This habit she had contracted during her seclusion, with a view to deaden her grief and make her sleep at night.

And after the grief was over the habit remained, and grew upon her constantly, until now she was never without her phial of the deadly stuff, and her face was coffee-coloured and her nerves completely shattered with the poison. A fancied victim to nearly every chronic disease in the world, her room, as Godfrey had said, or rather the largest closet in her room, was like an apothecary's shop, with its bottles of medicine and galvanic batteries.

Exceedingly proud and exclusive, she held herself above most of her acquaintances, and made them feel that she did, and still exercised over them an influence which would draw every one of them to her side when she wished them to come.

Few women understood the art of dressing better than she did, and when arrayed in evening costume, with her diamonds and her lace, she was still a very handsome and attractive woman, capable of entertaining a roomful of guests, and keeping them delighted with her ready wit and brilliant repartees.

She would never marry, she said, and yet more than Godfrey believed that she had no objection to becoming Mrs. Schuyler the second if only she were asked to do so.

True it was that since her sister's death she had spent most of her time at the Hill, giving as an excuse that "Emily's poor, dear children needed a mother's care so badly, while Howard was always happier to have her there."

Of this last there might have been two opinions, but Mr Schuyler was a peaceable man and always made her welcome at his house, and humoured her whims and listened to her advice when he chose to do so, and offered no remonstrance when after Emily's death she appropriated to herself the very best and pleasantest room in the house, which, as it chanced to be in the south wing, was one of the suite intended for Edith, and which she surrendered with what reluctance we shall see hereafter.

During the absence of her brother-in-law she had remained at Schuyler Hill enacting the part of lady patroness of the town, and always, when the most unpopular from her offensive pride, managing to do something by which she was brought before the people in the light of a public benefactor, or a generous, self-sacrificing woman, whose delight it was to visit the fatherless and feed the poor and hungry.

This was Miss Christine Rossiter, whom I did not like and who did not like me. I was not high enough in the world to be treated as her equal, nor low enough to be patronized, and fed and clothed from her bounty, and as I did make some pretensions to society she snubbed me accordingly and was disliked by me in return.

Alice Creighton was Mr. Schuyler's ward and the niece of the wife of Mrs. Schuyler's half-brother, the Rev. John Calvert, who lived in London, and whose home was properly her home, though she spent much of her time at Schuyler Hill, where her education was progressing under the direction of Miss Browning, the governess.

Short, fat, and chubby, with light hair and eyes and complexion, and a nose that turned up decidedly, she was not very pretty, save as young, happy girlhood is always pretty, but she was very stylish, which answered instead of beauty and made her remarked wherever she went, even before her five thousand a year was known to be one of her solid charms. Whatever was fashionable she wore in the extreme, and at the little church there was on Sundays a great deal of curiosity among the girls to see the last new style, as represented by the ladies in the Schuyler pew, especially Miss Creighton. And after they saw it they copied it as far as was possible, and then found to their surprise that what they had adopted as the latest in the beau-monde was laid aside for something later by their mirror of fashion.

"So provoking to have what you wear imitated by everybody," the little lady said, with a decided upward tendency of the nose, and still she rather liked this tacit homage to herself, and liked the country, too, where there was but one heiress and that herself.

She expected to marry Godfrey, and thought he would be doing a nice thing to get her, inasmuch as he would have only three thousand a year, unless Aunt Christine made him her heir, as it was sometimes thought she would.

The matrimonial arrangement had been settled between Alice's father before he died and Mr. Howard Schuyler and Alice acquiesced in it, and looked confidently forward to a time when she would have a house of her own and furnish it as no house in London had ever yet been furnished, and keep seven servants at least, with horses and carriages, and nothing to do from morning till night but enjoy herself, and be envied in doing it.

To all this grandeur Godfrey would be a very proper appendage. He was good-looking and came from a family superior even to her own; he could be a gentleman when he chose, and would look very nice, too, beside her in the park and at the opera and when she entered a dining-room on some festive occasion, if he would only relinquish some of his habits which annoyed her so, and pay more attention to points of etiquette.

And she really did hope great things from his tour abroad. A person who had travelled, who could say "When I was in Paris or Rome," was of far more importance in her estimation and worthy of more consideration than one who had never done so. There were certain things to be had by a foreign tour and those who had them not were to be pitied or despised.

This was Miss Alice Creighton as nearly as I can photograph her at the time of which I write, while Julia Schuyler, who comes next in order, was much like her in disposition, but different in looks.

Julia was tall and slender, and a brunette, with clear, olive complexion, high colour, sparkling black eyes, and a quantity of glossy black hair, of which she was very proud, and which she wore becomingly. Let the fashion be what it might. Some people called her beautiful, but that she could never be with her wide mouth and large ears, but she certainly was handsome and could, if she chose, be very agreeable and even fascinating, but, except with her equals, she did not often choose, and was in known in town as a proud, haughty girl, caring only for herself and the few favoured ones belonging to her circle. And yet she taught in Sunday school, and made clothing for the poor, as also did Alice Creighton, and esteemed herself almost a saint because she once carried with her own hands a dish of soup to poor old bed-ridden Mrs. Vandusenbisen, whose grandchild was called after her at the instigation of the mischievous Godfrey.

Julia went too sometimes on errands of mercy, and felt herself on a par with the sisters of charity, and had a lump of camphor in her pocket to prevent contagion, and asked the little ones if they knew the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, affecting great surprise if they did not, and telling them if they did that they ought to be confirmed at once and grow up respectable citizens.

Very different from all this was Emma, pale-faced, quiet Emma, who believed everybody to be what he or she seemed, and wished herself as good as Alice and Julia, who were so devout at church, and who read a long chapter every morning and a short psalm every night.

Emma did not like to read the Bible, and always glanced ahead to see how long the chapter was, and felt glad when it was ended. And she did not like putting her head down in church as Alice and Julia

did, because it looked as if she was good, when she knew she wasn't, and she did not like to visit the poor because as a general thing the close air of the rooms made her ill, and she was always unhappy for a whole day with thinking about them and fancying how she would feel were she also poor.

And yet of the three girls I liked Emma best, for I knew how true and honest and innocent she was, and though she too was proud, she tried to overcome her pride, because she thought it wrong, and in her heart had a sincere desire to do what was right. No one ever called Emma handsome; her features were too sharp for that, but there was something in her smile and expression of her soft dark eyes which made her very attractive, and, as I thought sometimes, even prettier than Julia herself.

Take them altogether the ladies at Schuyler Hill were quite distinguished in manner and appearance, and we were rather proud to have them with us, for their presence added something of importance to our little town, and gave a certain éclat to our society.

Nor was their governess, Miss Helen Browning, much behind in style and personal appearance. Indeed, she prided herself upon manners and good-breeding, and knew every point of etiquette, from sitting bolt upright in her chair, with just the two tips of her boots visible, to eating soup with the side of her spoon, and never on any account allowing her hands to touch the table.

If Miss Rossiter Alice and Julia were proud, Miss Browning was a great deal prouder; and from her serene height as member of an old, decayed aristocratic family, and the governess of Schuyler Hill, looked down upon Elsie Armstrong, the village schoolmistress, with ineffable contempt, criticising my dress and the way I wore my hair as altogether too young for a woman of my age, speaking of me as if I had been a hundred instead of twenty-seven, while she was thirty, I knew, and wore her hair short in her neck, and her evening dresses very low.

And now, last of all, comes Mrs. Tiffe, the house-keeper, a dignified, energetic woman of fifty, who called herself a lady, and wore black silk every day with pink ribbons in her cap, and who, after several hard-fought battles with Miss Rossiter for the supremacy, had come off victorious, and reigned triumphant at Schuyler Hill, where she feared no one save the master himself, and liked no one but Godfrey. He was her idol, and he alone could unlock the mysterious closet under the stairs and call forth jam and jelly, and even marmalade as if he liked, though that always came hard, as being most to the taste of Mrs. Tiffe, and the one preserve more than another which she hated to have eaten.

Such luncheons as she gave the ladies when they were alone, and Godfrey not there to coax, or his father to insist! A chicken wing and back, with a slice of bread and butter, and possibly a baked apple, if there chanced to be any in danger of spoiling; while her breakfasts were delicate and dainty enough for a fairy, or the worst form which dyspepsia ever assumed.

"Frugal repasts," Godfrey called them; but for their frugality Mrs. Tiffe made amends at dinner, which was served with great profusion, and all the elegance the house could command. Nothing was too nice, no amount too much for dinner; and Mrs. Tiffe, in her rustling silk, felt her heart swell with pride when she saw her ladies, handsomely dressed, fling into the spacious dining-room, where the table was bright with silver and the flowers which never failed of being there.

No matter if there were no guests in the house, there was always a certain number of courses; and when, on extra occasions, the number was added to, and sometimes reached as high as twelve, and occupied three hours, the lady was jubilant, and felt that she did indeed belong to a great family, which had no rival in the land.

To her the Schuylers and Rossiters represented the world, and anybody outside that world, unless it were Miss Creighton, were looked upon with disgust and barely tolerated.

Miss Christine, it is true, was not a favourite, but she was a Rossiter, and Mrs. Tiffe charged all her faults to the fact that "she was an old maid, and couldn't help being queer," and so endured her quietly when her own wishes were not opposed.

And this was the household into which the news of Mr. Schuyler's second marriage fell like a bomb-shell in the enemy's camp, wounding each one, and each one giving out a cry according to her disposition, for a description of which I must take a fresh sheet and begin another chapter.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE news came to them at Schuyler Hill one hot, sultry August morning, when the thermometer was 90 degrees in the shade, and the air was like a furnace.

Breakfast was very late that morning, and Mrs. Tiffe

was furious. She had committed the extravagant rage of broiled chicken and muffins, which of course were spoiled.

Miss Rossiter had not slept well until after the rising bell rang, and, as was her custom after a restless night, she loitered in bed even after she was awake, and dawdled over her toilet and bath, and took so much time in dressing that the clock was striking nine when she at last entered the dining-room, followed by the three girls and their governesses, all inveighing against the weather except Emma. She liked it. Naturally chilly and cold, the heat suited her, and her face alone was pleased and contented as she took her seat at the table and attacked the cold chicken and half-warm, heavy muffins, which her dyspeptic auntie could not eat.

"Bring me a slice of dry toast," she said, to Martha, who, on returning with the toast, brought in two letters for Miss Julia.

"From father and Godfrey," Julia said. "Excuse me, please, while I read them."

Leaning back in her chair she broke the seal of her father's first and read a few lines, then with a start which nearly upset her cup of chocolate, exclaimed: "Oh, horrible, girls! Aunt Christine, listen—father—"

"Martha, you can go, now," she said, suddenly remembering the girl, who departed to the kitchen, where the news had already penetrated, and where servants stood open-mouthed around Perry, who was reading the letter his master had sent to him.

"What is it, Julia?" Miss Rossiter asked, when Martha was gone, and Julia, whose eyes had run at lightning speed over the contents of the letter, replied:

"Father is going to be married to a Miss Edith Lyle, Aunt Sinclair's hired companion. You remember he mentioned her once before as living at Oakwood. Hear what he says of her, 'She is a lady of good family, the daughter of a clergyman, the friend and companion of my deceased sister, your late Aunt Sinclair. She possesses many accomplishments, and is what I consider a very remarkable personage.' How like father that sounds. 'And I expect that all due deference will be paid to her by every member of my household.' He has underscored that. Please break the news to your Aunt Christine, and tell Mrs. Tiffe to see that all the rooms in the south wing are made ready for Mrs. Schuyler. I have written to Perry about refurbishing them, but Tiffe must superintend it a little—"

"Oh, dreadful, I believe I am going to faint—my hartsorn, Emma, please," Miss Rossiter gasped, the paleness showing through her coffee-coloured skin, and giving her a ghastly, peculiar look.

The hartsorn was found, and two fans were brought into requisition, and then Miss Rossiter spoke again, this time hysterically and in tears.

"My poor sister to be so insulted! A horrid companion! and she was a Rossiter! Oh, I cannot bear it, my poor disgraced nieces, my heart is breaking for you!"

"But, Auntie Christine, he says she is a lady, the daughter of a clergyman," Emma said, soothingly—hers the only voice raised in defence of the intruder, the interloper, the adventuress, as Miss Rossiter termed the expected bride.

Emma's heart had throbbed painfully at the thought of a new mother, but it was natural for her to defend whatever she believed abused, and she spoke up for the unknown Edith, until Julia, who had been reading Godfrey's letter, uttered a cry of bitter anger and scorn, and said, sternly:

"Hush, Em, you don't know what you are talking about; a lady, indeed, and the daughter of a clergyman! A woman of forty, with a cork leg, and glass eye, and cracked voice, is a nice mother to bring us!"

"A wha-at? A wha-at?" Miss Rossiter gasped, with a paler tint on her yellow face, while Alice and Emma both exclaimed simultaneously: "A cork leg and a glass eye! What do you mean? Let me see!" And looking over Julia's shoulder Alice read aloud what Godfrey had written, not omitting his thrust at Miss Rossiter's aches and pains.

Godfrey had said, "The sight of her will take your breath away," and in fact the very thought of her did that, and for full a minute after the letter was read there was not a sound heard in the room where the indignant and confounded ladies sat, each staring blankly at the other, and neither able to speak or move.

Miss Rossiter was the first to stir, and, with a moaning cry, "I cannot bear it," she went into violent hysterics, and Martha was called in, and the poor lady was taken to her room, where she tried, one after another, every bottle of medicine in her closet, but to no effect; even the best remedy failed, and she sank upon the bed in a crumpled heap, shivering with cold, and asking for shawls and blankets on that August day, with a temperature of ninety degrees in the shade.

Perhaps Miss Rossiter herself had not been aware

how much Mr. Schuyler was to her, or how hard it would be to see another woman there in her sister's place. She had too much sense really to believe she would ever fill it, yet the first smart had been that of disappointment and a sense of wrong to herself, while the second was a keen pang of mortification and anger that if he must choose another he had chosen that caricature on womanhood described so graphically by Godfrey. It is true she did not believe him literally. Neither did his sisters, who sat in the library with white faces and tearful eyes.

Julia was wrathful and defiant, and was already in a state of fierce rebellion against the woman of forty with the crack in her voice. So much she believed, but the cork leg and glass eye were too thoroughly Godfrey's style to be credited.

"Probably the woman limps and wears glasses," she said, when she could trust herself to speak at all, "and perhaps she squints, but I have no faith in the cork leg and glass eye. Godfrey made that up. Father is not the man to marry such a monster, and then expect us to pay all due deference to her. The idea of my deferring to such a woman! I hate her. I'll poison her, the wretch!"

Julia Schuyler was terrible in her wrath, and with that expression in her flashing eyes and about the white, quivering lips, she looked equal to anything, and Edith might well have trembled could she have seen the dark-faced girl, who, with clenched fists and lightning glances of anger in her eyes, threatened to poison her. Julia would not of course acknowledge that she really had murder in her heart, but she felt outraged and insulted and disgraced and as if she must do something to avert the horrible evil threatening them all. But what could she do? To oppose her will to her father's was like trying to move a mountain of stone with her puny strength. The mountain would not be hurt, and only she would suffer from the attempt.

There was no help, no hope. When her anger had spent itself she burst into tears and cried passionately, just as Emma had done from the first, but with this difference, she cried from wrath and indignant mortification, while Emma's tears were more for the dead mother whose place was to be filled, and whose death it seemed to her now had only been yesterday.

The governess, who knew that remark of any kind from herself would be resented as impertinent, wisely said nothing, while Alice too was silent, except as she occasionally said to Julia:

"It is too bad, and I am sorry for you; sorry for us all."

Looking upon Godfrey as her own especial property, Alice felt that whatever affected the Schuylers affected her, and she was sorry accordingly for this thing about to happen, but it did not hurt her as it did Julia and Emma, who must call the strange woman mother, and who wept on. Julia could cry now that her first fierce passion was spent, until Miss Rossiter sent for them to come to her room together with Miss Creighton. She had taken some brandy and some morphine, and felt considerably better, though her heart was aching still with a dreary sense of loss and disappointment and disgrace, if half Godfrey had written was true, and half was all that any stretch of her imagination would allow her to believe.

Miss Lyle was undoubtedly very plain and ordinary, but she ignored the cork leg and glass eye, just as Julia had done, and when the young girls entered the room she said to them:

"I have sent for you to talk over this dreadful thing, and to say that I do not credit all Godfrey's story. He is a sad boy to exaggerate, you know. Still, let the woman be what she may, we do not want her here where we have been so happy."

Miss Rossiter's voice faltered a little, but soon recovering herself, she continued:

"No, we do not want her here; and I, for one, declare war—war to the knife!"

She spoke bitterly now, and her black eyes flashed with contemptuous scorn.

"But, Aunt Christine," Emma said, "it is father's house, and he will not let you treat her badly."

"Nor shall I," Miss Rossiter said, loftily: "I shall let her alone severely, and leave this house as soon as possible after her arrival. Nor shall I leave my sister's daughters with the adventuress. I've been thinking it over, and have concluded to hire or buy a house and set up housekeeping for myself, in which case you will go with me, of course, and leave your father to enjoy life with his low-born bride."

"Father wrote she was a lady, and Godfrey says we shall like her," Emily quickly interposed, feeling that for herself she preferred staying with the "adventuress" to living with Aunt Christine.

Julia, on the contrary, was caught with the house in town, which was far more to her taste than the dull country, and, with a withering glance at her sister, she said:

"I'm ashamed of you, Em, that you cannot appreciate auntie's offer, but speak, instead, for that woman. I, for one, am greatly obliged to auntie, and shall go with her."

"And I, too, if she will have me. I'd rather live anywhere than at Uncle Calvert's," Alice said; "and I hope the house will be near the park. Won't it be nice, though?"

"Yes, I mean to have it nice," Miss Rossiter said, warming into something like enthusiasm as she thought of a home of her own. "I shall furnish it elegantly, and have a reception every week, with little *récherché* dinner parties for our circle."

Julia began to be interested, and hoped she would see a little society before she was quite forty, while Alice resolved to be married from that house near the park, instead of Uncle Calvert's poky little band-box.

And while the three ladies planned and talked of the new home in town, to which "that adventuress" would drive them, each was conscious of a pang as she thought of leaving the delightful place, where was so much of comfort and luxury, with no shadow of care or trouble.

And of the three Miss Rossiter felt it most keenly. Naturally indolent and fond of her ease, she had enjoyed her sister's house, and hated much to leave it, but the flat had gone forth.

The hope, if hope she ever entertained, of being more there than a guest was fled.

There was to be a new mistress whose name was not Rossiter, and she must go.

She settled that point at once, and then said to the young girls by way of caution, for pride in her brother-in-law was still strong within her:

"I think it will be better not to mention Godfrey's letter—that is, not to speak of the woman's personal appearance, which may not be so bad as we fear. Let her show for herself what she is. We must tell, of course, of the expected marriage, but we need say nothing farther."

In this reasonable advice all three of the girls concurred, and yet through some agency it was soon rumoured that the new lady of Schuyler Hill was deformed and homely and poor and the hired companion of the late Mrs. Sinclair, and that Miss Rossiter had declared war to the knife, while Julia talked of poison, and Emma cried day and night and would not be comforted. Who told all this, nobody knew. Possibly it was the governess, and possibly Mrs. Tiffe, who bristled all over with importance and secret exultation over her routed and discomforted foe, poor Miss Rossiter. Mrs. Tiffe, too, had had her letter from Mr. Schuyler, and Perry, her son and head man on the place, had his letter also, in which were numerous instructions with regard to the furnishing of the room in the south wing.

"All the rooms," he had said, and he was minute in his directions with regard to the corner room with the bay window. This was to be Mrs. Schuyler's boudoir, or private sitting-room, and was to be fitted up in drab and pale rose-pink, while the sleeping-room, which was separated from it by bath-room and dressing-closet, was to be furnished with blue, and the little room beyond, where Mr. Schuyler kept his books and private papers, was to be green and oak.

"Let everything be new and in the latest style," he wrote to Perry. "You can get men to know just what is needful, while the ladies and your mother will give you the benefit of their advice and good taste, so I shall expect to find everything perfect when I come."

Thus had he written to Perry, while to Mrs. Tiffe he wrote much the same, saying that from past experience he knew he could rely upon her and hoped she would give the matter her own personal supervision, in which case it would be right. Thus flattered and trusted and deferred to, Mrs. Tiffe espoused the cause of the new wife and hurrahed for the coming change of government. Anything was preferable to Miss Rossiter, who, since her sister's death, had stayed there altogether, and Mrs. Tiffe cared little whether Edith walked on two crutches or one, provided she freed her from the enemy.

"My son will obey orders to the letter," she said, crisply, when Julia asked what her father had written to him, and what he meant to do. "If Mr. Schuyler says the south wing must be cleared and refurnished, it will be, and Miss Rossiter may as well vacate to-day as to-morrow. There's no time to be lost in dawdling."

Now, the corner room, with the wide bay window, was the room of all others which Miss Rossiter preferred, and though it was kept as a guest-chamber during Lady Emily's life, Christine had often slept there when visiting at the Hill, and when she came to stay altogether, to be with her "dear nieces," she had appropriated it to herself and held possession of it in spite of Mrs. Tiffe's broad hints that there were other apartments in the house besides the "very best chamber."

But she must give it up now, and, with many a sigh of regret, she saw Kitty gather up her bottles of medicine, her boxes of pills, her wine and her brandy, and galvanic battery, and bear them to another closet on the opposite side of the house.

It was hard, and Miss Rosseter felt very much injured and aggrieved, and cried softly to herself, and thought very bitter things of that woman who had brought her to this strait, and for whom the house was being turned upside down, or, at least, that portion of it known as the south wing.

Mrs. Tiffe was already there at work with her maids, taking up carpets and removing furniture, burning coffee and sugar and paper by way of removing the smell of drugs with which the apartment was permeated.

But do what she would the faint odour of valerian was still perceptible, making the good woman "sick as a dog," as she expressed it, and bringing into requisition as a last experiment burning feathers, which, combined with the valerian, made the atmosphere of the place unbearable.

"Paint will do it, and nothing else," was Mrs. Tiffe's final verdict, as she retreated to the open window and leaned out for a breath of pure air.

Not the slightest interest did either of the ladies show in the changes being made, but Mrs. Tiffe and her son felt themselves equal to the task until it came to selecting carpets and furniture and curtains in London.

Then Perry said some one ought to go with him and not let him take the entire responsibility.

But neither Miss Rosseter, nor Julia, nor Alice made any response, and the probability was that he would go alone, until the morning came, when Emma appeared at breakfast in her walking-dress and announced her intention to accompany Perry.

"Somebody ought to go for father's sake," she said; "and if none else will I must. I shall stop at Uncle Calvert's and get auntie to help me."

To this there was no open opposition. Miss Rosseter had the toothache and could not talk, while Julia merely raised her eyebrows in token of her surprise. And Alice said:

"You are certainly very kind, Emma, and forgiving, to be so much interested for that woman."

"It isn't for that woman; it's for father, and because I know he wishes it," Emma replied, as she put on her hat and shawl and started with Perry for town.

She was gone three days, and at the end of that time four men appeared and commenced the work of measuring, repainting and frescoing the rooms intended for the bride.

Then in due time came the carpets and the lambrèques and the lace-curtains and the furniture, and more men to see that everything fitted and was as it should be.

"Handsome enough for the queen herself," Mrs. Tiffe said, when all was done.

And she walked complacently through the suite of rooms, sniffing occasionally as she passed the open closet, to see if there lingered yet the faintest approach to valerian or drug of any kind.

There did not.

Paint and varnish had killed all that, and the air of the rooms was pure and sweet as the rooms themselves were beautiful and attractive.

I used in those days to be occasionally at the great house, and, as I never presumed upon my acquaintance with the ladies, or tried to force myself upon their notice, they treated me with a great deal of kindness, and seemed to like my society.

So when, one Saturday morning after the repairs were finished, I met Miss Julia in the village, and she said, in her usual half-cordial, half-indifferent tone: "What an age it is since you were to see us; suppose you come round this afternoon and have a game of croquet, and stay to dinner." I accepted the invitation, and at about four p.m. rang the bell.

I did not suppose I was very early, especially as we were to play croquet; but the ladies, who always slept after lunch, were not yet dressed, and so I went with Mrs. Tiffe to the kitchen to see some jelly she had been making, and which had "come beautifully."

As I was about returning to the parlour, she said to me:

"Don't you want to see them rooms?"

I knew what rooms she meant, and I did want to see them; for had they not been a subject for at least three weeks' talk in town, where their merits and demerits were discussed, together with the enormous sum of money it had cost to fit them up?

Taking me first into the green-room, where the oak leaves in the rich velvet carpet looked as if you might pick them up, Mrs. Tiffe opened the doors through, and bidding me take in the effect, asked what I thought of it.

The effect was beautiful beyond anything I had dreamed.

Especially was I delighted with the sitting-room, where the carpet was of that soft, chène pattern so tasteful and exquisite; and the furniture was delicate drab, with trimmings of pale rose-pink.

There were rare pictures on the wall, and curtains of finely-wrought lace before the windows, with lambrèques of rose-pink, satin, to match the furniture, while cushions and easy chairs and ottomans and inlaid tables, which almost told their price themselves, were scattered about in such a way as to give the room an air of cosy, homelike comfort, as well as elegance.

And then the sleeping apartment, with its carpet of blue, its furniture of the same colour, its snowy bed, with pillow-cases and coverlet edged with dainty lace, and a covering of blue satin laid across the foot, in case it should be needed.

How lovely it all was, and how like a dream it seemed to be looking at it, and knowing it was real and not a mere illusion.

Then, as I remembered what I had heard of the bride's deformity and plainness, I thought it such a pity that the occupant of these rooms should not be lovely like them, and a fitting ornament for so much grandeur.

Lady Emily, with her pale, sorrowful face and expressionless eyes, would have looked better there, I said, or even Miss Rosseter, with her coffee-coloured skin and faint odour of medicine. When dressed and feeling well she was still very attractive, and, as I went down stairs, I found her sitting under the verandah, in her pretty white-cambric dress, with the scarlet shawl she wore so much wrapped around her, her still glossy black hair becomingly arranged, and with a single white flower among the heavy braids. I thought Mr. Schuyler would have done far better to have taken her than the bride he had chosen for the mistress of his lately home.

We had a very quiet, stupid, six-hand game of croquet, and the dinner was quieter, stupider still, for all the ladies seemed preoccupied and disinclined to talk. Not a word was said of the marriage by any one until I was leaving, when Emma came up to me, and said, very softly and sadly:

"They are in town. We had a telegram this afternoon. They will be home soon."

She did not say who they were, but I pressed her hand in token of my sympathy, for I knew that the "they" had reference to the much-dreaded step-mother—the new mistress of their father's house.

(To be continued.)

THE JEWELLER OF FRANKFORT.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FAR apart from any other dwelling stood a public-house of the lowest description. It was patronized only by desperate characters. There was a dirty saloon with a bar in front, from which, by going up a flight of steps and through a narrow passage and doorway, you came to a dingy hall of large dimensions.

This was a ball-room. There was some attempt at decoration here in the shape of tawdry frescoes on the walls, and a couple of dirty and ragged flags hung from a wooden gallery where three fiddlers were stationed on ball nights.

Round the dancing-room were ranged wooden benches, and the place was indifferently well-lighted with gas.

Now old Madame Bertrand had secretly informed the chief of the police that on a certain evening Cesar Bastian was to be there in the disguise of a Jew pedlar, and that she had agreed to meet him, and give him a sum of money that he had left on deposit with her, the proverbial "honour among thieves" making it a perfectly safe transaction.

Some time had elapsed now since the murder of Claudine. The police had been secret about their proceedings, and the public did not know that the name of the assassin was in their possession, for the Steinbergs, the Hartmanns and the doctor had been cautioned not to reveal it.

To the newspapers reporters Colonel Mowbray and his associates gave out that there was no clue to the mystery, and that they had long ago given up all hopes of detecting the criminal.

Bastian himself believed that he had shot Claudine dead, and did not dream that she had lived long enough to denounce him. He did not suspect that she had accused him to the police before her death.

His success in escaping the penalty of former crimes gave him confidence to emerge from his hiding-place once more, not indeed into the light of day, but into such haunts of his wicked associates as the Old Stone Tavern.

It is only clumsy criminals who fly from the theatre of their crimes. Bold and experienced malefactors always remain near the spot. Sheltered by

accomplices or sympathizers they are housed, perhaps, within a street of the scene of a murder or burglary, perhaps within a stone's-throw of a police-court or a jail. A flight to distant parts is a last resort.

"Very well, then," said Colonel Mowbray, after hearing the woman's statement, "you shall go with this man," pointing to Jacques Renard, "to-night to the Old Stone Tavern."

"I dare not," said the woman, with a shudder. "I dare not face the man I have betrayed. I dare not venture into that wolf's den."

"I will go there alone," said Jacques Renard. "I claim the privilege of capturing this villain myself. Give me the money you have in charge for him."

"No," cried the old woman. "That I won't do. I swore he should have the money to-night. It's his money, and I'll give it up to no man, not if it costs me my life to keep it."

"I give you my sacred honour, woman," said the detective, "that he shall have the money. I will place it in his own hands."

She finally consented and handed it to Jacques Renard.

He verified the sum by counting it, and gave her a receipt for it, stating therein "to be delivered in person to Cesar Bastian."

"At what hour," he asked, "were you to meet him?"

"Eleven o'clock, sharp," was the answer. "Very well, I shall be there punctually as your representative."

"I advise you to take care of yourself," said the old woman. "I wouldn't like to bet either on your pulling him or getting off with a whole skin."

And, with a hoarse, cackling laugh, she shuffled away.

A long time was spent in making certain arrangements with the superintendent of police, Jacques Renard stipulating that he should enter the house alone.

Then he left to assume the disguise he had decided upon.

By ten o'clock that night the dance-hall in the Old Stone Tavern was the scene of quite a gathering. Burglars and thieves were there with their ladies.

The three musicians were in their cage, and the company danced reels and quadrilles.

As in the fashionable world, there were divisions and lines of demarcation.

There were no outrageous violations of decorum, for Red Bill used to declare, with a volley of oaths, that he was determined to maintain the respectability of his house, and would turn out any one who dared to break his rules and regulations.

Besides, it was necessary to keep up appearances, for, as the house was public, a good many honest outsiders, green countrymen and the like, were always found among the company.

Somewhat late in the evening a pedlar, wearing a very long, iron-gray beard, and a brown overcoat so much too long for him that the sleeves hid his hands and the skirts trailed on the floor, came in and took his seat on one of the benches.

He stooped very much, either from the habit of carrying a heavy pack or from the weight of years.

He called for liquor, but he sought no associations, though he certainly knew some of the men and women present, for he exchanged mysterious signs of intelligence with them.

This man, it is needless to say, was Cesar Bastian. He had been in hiding ever since the night of his last crime, and had suffered greatly in consequence, for solitude is torture to the most hardened criminal.

He had drunk deeply, but this brought him neither quiet nor oblivion.

For nights and days he had only closed his eyes in fitful slumber.

In fact he dreaded sleep, for in his dreams his whole career passed before him. He saw himself in the hideous light of truth.

He re-enacted the whole drama of his life. Now he was picking rags in the gutters of Paris, happier than when afterwards he was picking pockets.

Then, by a strange turn of fortune, he excited the compassion of Count Bastian, who gave him instruction and name.

Then he retraced his brief career as a man of fashion and gambler.

He recalled his repudiation by his benefactor, wended out at last by his exactions. He pictured to himself that night when he was detected by the count robbing his house, and killed the man who lifted him from beggary.

He remembered another dark deed, the murder of Marceline, daughter of the French detective, Jacques Renard.

He reviewed his life in the prison at Brest, his escape, his career in Germany, his treatment of Caspar and Minna, his ferocious love of Claudine, and her murder, his third assassination.

No wonder that he could not endure solitude longer.

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He would have come to this thronged den to-night even if he had not made the appointment with Madame Bertrand. But he must have the money.

He kept eyeing the clock with feverish impatience. The hour-hand was almost at eleven, yet she was not present.

If she failed him!

What! meditating a fourth murder, Cesar Bastian?

The sharp, metallic tongue of the clock told him hour just as the dancers were taking their seats after a quadrille, and a tall old woman, carrying a basket of oranges and apples on her arm, came shuffling in and offered her wares to the ladies and gentlemen.

In the course of her rounds she came to Cesar Bastian, who was sitting apart from the rest of the company, and said, in a cracked voice:

"Apples and oranges."

Bastian shook his head surlily and waved her away, when the old woman bent forward and said, in a low tone:

"Madame Bertrand is very ill—she sent me here to see you. I have something for you, if you are C. B."

"I thought the old jade had played me false," replied Bastian. "You have a package for me?"

To assure you that I am the right man, I will tell you the contents—one hundred and eighty-four sovereigns."

"Right," said the old woman. "But she said you must give her a receipt for it. Here is her book and pencil."

Bastian recognized the dirty memorandum-book with the old woman's scrawling entries.

He counted the money, found it right, and wrote the required receipt, signing it "Cesar Bastian."

"Take care of that book," said Cesar, "and give it into the old woman's hands as soon as you can."

"I'll take care of the book," said the old woman. "And of you too. Cesar Bastian, I swear to capture you, and I have kept my oath."

He—for it was Jacques Renard—seized the master-factor by the throat as he spoke.

"Remember Marceline!" he shouted, hoarsely. "Go and join her!" retorted Bastian, springing to his feet, shaking off the detective and striking him full in the breast with a Spanish knife.

The unhappy man reeled a few feet, and then fell headlong to the floor.

"Murder, murder!" yelled half a dozen voices—of course those of outsiders.

Red Bill rushed in white with terror.

"The police are all about the house," he cried. "Then bar the door and douse the lights!" roared Bastian, whom peril always roused to prompt and daring action.

"No, no—let 'em come in," said the landlord. "I ain't afraid of 'em."

"Stand aside!" cried Bastian, hurling the landlord out of the way with the strength of a giant.

"To the door, boys! I hear the tramp of the police. Keep one light burning."

The thieves bolted and chained the door, and piled the chairs and benches against it, while the staves of the officers outside rang furiously on the outer panels.

"Now, Bill," said Bastian, "show us a way out of this trap, or I'll murder you as I killed your second who arrested me."

The landlord was cowed by the superior daring of the assassin, and said:

"There is only one way out—through the cellar. You are standing on the trap."

"Hurrah!" cried Bastian, but speaking only in a hoarse whisper. "Follow me, lads."

And seizing the ring-bolt he tore open the heavy trap-door.

A glare of light burst upward from the cellar, and Colonel Mowbray, followed by half a dozen armed detectives, sprang out of the opening.

He was about to lay his hand on the collar of Bastian, when Jacques Renard, who had risen to his feet, pushed him aside, saying:

"Stand back—he is my prisoner, and mine alone. Cesar Bastian, your blow felled me, but I came prepared for you. Look here!"

And tearing open his dress he displayed the bullet-proof steel breastplate which had saved his life. But the end was not yet. The scorpion, surrounded by a circle of fire, is fabled to sting itself to death.

Bastian stood at bay, all hope of escape gone, but not yet captured, for his "pals" had drawn their pistols and held the officers in check. He might yet secure two ends—revenge and death. Quick as lightning he drew a revolver, fired at Jacques Renard, missed him, and then with a second barrel he blew his own brains out.

His accomplices surrendered at discretion. Jacques Renard stood over the fallen felon.

"He has cheated the gallows," he said, "but his own hand has avenged me. I claimed him as my pri-

soner—I claim his body. This man was the property of the French government for life, the body belongs to it in death, and shall be buried in the prison-yard at Brest."

Thus ended the career of one of the vilest criminals on record.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of course the end of Cesar Bastian put an end to all the mystery which had surrounded his career, as the officers of justice had no motive for withholding the details of his story. The vigilant reporters vied with each other in preparing versions of his history. All his crimes, all his aliases were fully set forth, and every intelligent man, woman and child throughout the country became familiar with them.

This exposure was of advantage to Max Hartmann. One day he was surprised to find his name in a paper in an advertisement, saying that if he would call at a certain office it would be worth his while. He did so, and met a sharp-looking, well-dressed young fellow, who said he knew something of the deceased felon whom he passed by the name of Bertold Baumman.

Now this young fellow was no other than Jacob Finer, formerly clerk in the office of Melchisedech Burnheimer, who had swindled Cesar Bastian out of a thousand pounds deposited with the bankrupt broker. Finer had resolved to lead an honest life, and his share in that transaction weighed heavily on his conscience, so he had indeed that he almost made up his mind to make a public confession of his offence.

Burnheimer had bought up all his liabilities through agents, returned from his foreign tour, and was about again making money as honestly as it is ever made by speculating. When the story of Bastian came to be published, Finer satisfied him that the deposit made in Baumman's name was part of the money entrusted to Cesar Bastian to be delivered to him. By threats and persuasion he prevailed on his former employer to pay over the amount to Hartmann, as it undoubtedly belonged to him, though, of course, the legal proof was wanting.

This was done, and the former insisted on liberally rewarding the honesty of Finer, so that after all the worthy German was only a loser of a couple of hundred pounds by the villainy of the convict.

The sum recovered was very acceptable notwithstanding he was now making money fast. It enabled him to clear off at once all encumbrances on his farm.

One day Dr. Bolman called upon Hermann Steinberg on a grave mission.

He stated that he had a patient—a lady—whom he believed was dying, and who fancied that she had grievously wronged the jeweller's son.

"Whether this is a delusion of my patient or not," he said, "I should feel easier if you would see Miss Flora Falkenstein."

"She did not send for me?" faltered young Steinberg.

"No, I took it on myself to invite you."

Flora Falkenstein dying?

Without a moment's hesitation Hermann went with the doctor.

At the house Mr. Falkenstein, grave and sad, met them in the hall.

"Will you take my hand now?" he said to Hermann.

Silently the afflicted young man returned the pressure of his former friend's hand.

Then he followed the doctor into the sick-room.

"I have brought you an old friend, Flora," said the physician.

She turned on her pillow, recognized Hermann, and held out her hand white hand to him.

He knelt at the bedside, pressed it to his lips, and, as his tears fell fast, said:

"Oh, Flora! can you forgive me?"

"It is I who should sue for your forgiveness," said the invalid. "Thank Heaven! you have come to hear me implore your pardon. You will not withhold it when I whisper in your ear a sacred secret—I never ceased to love you for a moment."

"Could I only have believed that," sighed Hermann, "what misery—what torture might have been avoided!"

"Enough for the present," said Dr. Bolman. "My patient cannot bear continued agitation."

He drew Hermann away and left the room with him.

Now the good doctor had been guilty of a "pious fraud."

He had not believed his patient dying, though he thought her condition critical.

He had heard her talking in her troubled fever-sleep and had surprised the secret of her former relations with Hermann and her present trouble. Hence his mission and the result.

From that day Flora Falkenstein very rapidly mended.

In three weeks the roses were again blended with the lilies in her cheeks, and in one month there was

a wedding, and Hermann Steinberg carried home his bride—his first, his only love—for Claudine had only bewitched him and ensnared him, never won his heart.

Walter Ransom died in prison soon after his interview with Mr. Falkenstein.

Mabel never came back to the den of the dock-rats, which was shortly broken up by the police. Soon after the thief's death, the body of a beautiful young woman, with marks of violence upon it, was found floating in the river, and a dirty, ragged half-man, half-boy identified it as "Mabel, the queen of the dock-rats."

He was the only man who followed the remains to the grave.

It was Jim.

One day a thin, ragged, barefoot boy begged at the Hartmanns' door for a crust of bread. No mendicant ever went away from that door as hungry as he came. Mrs. Hartmann asked him into the kitchen, gave him a chair and set before him a plate of bread and butter, and one of sliced ham.

As the wretched wanderer was devouring the food, however, Caspar, coming in from the flower-garden, saw him, and exclaimed:

"Why, bless my mother, this is Jim!"

The outcast's eyes brightened. The sight of Caspar was like a ray of sunshine poured into his desolate life.

"Why, how you've grown!" he cried; "while I—I've been a shrinking. I don't weigh as much as I done when you know'd me by fifteen pound."

"At the old trade?" asked Caspar, sadly.

"No; since Mabel was drowned and the nest broke up, I haint stole nothink—not a penny—not a crust of bread—and I'm like to make a die of it. Nobody wouldn't give a cove no work to do when he haint got no father and no mother, and is worse nor a foundling—a dock rat what subsists by priggin' what haint his'n. But Caspar, I've never forgot what you told me once—better starve than steal. I'll starve afore I steal agin."

Mar Hartmann, who had come in and been in consultation with his wife, now came forward.

"Boy," said he, "for the sake of my children, I'm willing to give you a trial. If you give me your word to work diligently and be honest, I'll employ you, and give you board, lodging and wages."

"I've heard tell about angels, but I thought they had wings onto their shoulders, and come flopping down outer the sky. But you're one on 'em, by jings! Wages! I don't want a penny. Only gimme enough grub to keep me from cavin' in, and a bunch of straw in the corner of your shed, and I'll work my fingers to the bone for you."

This poor wail, the victim of circumstances from his babyhood, but endowed with a good heart, was rescued from starvation and moral ruin by the honest Germans whose children he had befriended in their darkest hour, and no one who saw the quiet, well-dressed lad on his way to Sunday school with Caspar and Minna would ever guess the former life he led.

So happiness at last blessed the honest Germans whose fortunes we have traced through almost unexampled troubles and trials.

When Uncle Christian arrived, wealthy enough to rest from further labours, the circle was complete, and the electric chain of love united the families of Max Hartmann, the farmer, and Nicolaus Steinberg, the Jeweller of Frankfurt.

THE END.

ASTRONOMICAL DISCOVERY.—A new telescopic comet has just been discovered at Milan by the well-known comet discoverer, Tempel, in the constellation Pisces. It was subsequently observed by Dr. Bruhns, at Leipzig, being then in Cetus. He states that it was somewhat elongated, with an eccentric condensation, a nucleolus appearance, and about 2 minutes in diameter.

BIRD-CATCHING IN THE FAROE ISLANDS.—Dr. Dargent, in his sketches of foreign travel, gives a vivid description of the manner in which fowls go down the cliffs in search of sea-birds and their eggs. "It is a strange feeling," says one who describes the process to Dr. Dargent, "seeing you is the steep bare rock, the blue sky above you, and below you the still bluer tumbling sea; between the two you swing to and fro like a pendulum." The cragman is fastened to a rope by bands which go down his thighs, and by shoulder-straps; his hands and feet are free, and with them he must keep himself facing the cliff, while his companions above lower him down to the ledge where the birds breed. There he unbinds himself from the rope, makes it fast, and creep along the ledge, catching the birds in a net at the end of his pole as they fly out of their holes, killing them, and hanging them in pairs to the rope. Guillemots and puffins are taken thus, and a practiced fowler will make a bag of nine hundred or a thousand in a day, though he can only take up about a hundred with him on the rope at one time.



[CYRILLE'S DOUBTS.]

THE DRAMA AT CARONBERT HOUSE.

ON through the blackness, driven like a straw before the howling blast, went the barque "Calliope." Close to the rugged shore, straining in every joint, her cordage groaning like spirits in torture, she plunged, and neither human skill nor human hand could avert the dread result.

Again the thunder crashed through the dark heavens, the sea, lashed to fury, swept clean over her decks, and the lightning, for one brief instant bringing the scene of horror to view, disclosed white, agonized faces struggling amid the foam.

Then the heavy gloom came down again, the ocean hissed, the wild wind shrieked, the ship flew on until—a convulsive shudder from stern to stern, a chill on every heart, a moment of awful suspense, and then the water rushed into the state-rooms, the tall masts snapped and fell, the vessel parted amidships—consternation, weird confusion, terror led by gaunt Death, held supreme sway!

Low moans of anguish, frantic cries for help, the screams of women, the curses of hardened men, the wail of infants made a frightful chorus to the denouement music of the storm.

Anon lights gleamed along the sandy shore, the Italian fishermen hurried down to secure plunder from the wreck, perhaps to save a human life if it could be done without endangering their own.

"Here! Help, for Heaven's sake!"

The voice was hoarse, weak and tremulous, and sounded from a deep inlet beyond the scene of the wreck. Two swarthy men hastened to the spot, and just as the rain extinguished their torches they saw two human forms upon a spar—one clutching it apparently with his last grip, and the other clinging to it with his arms and legs. The distance was short enough to permit a rope to be thrown and it was done. A shout answered the effort—the lightning flashed again, and revealed only one man upon the spar, and he with the rope around his body. He was drawn ashore, and at once sank upon the earth in exhaustion. His rescuers could see his face twitch, his limbs contract, his eyes roll as if in delirium. At length he spoke, in a husky, faltering voice:

"Oh, Heaven! if I only could have saved him! But my strength failed me. Poor Lawrence! Ugh!"

A shudder went over his form, he clenched his hands and groaned aloud. Taking him in their arms the fishermen carried him to a hut up shore, and, leaving him in charge of two women, returned to the wreck. Naught but the wind moaned now—

human voices were still; there were fresh graves at the bottom of the sea.

Morning came, and the warm sun bathed nature in a golden radiance. The only survivor of the "Calliope" walked out of the hut, and looked about with wild, restless glance. The surge of the waves struck a terror to his soul, and he pressed his hands firmly to his brow.

"Idiot that I am, why should I quarrel with fate?" he muttered, beating his heels into the sand. "Am I not safe? Am I not Cyrille Atherton, the son of a marquis? Ha, ha! am I not?"

His eyes gleamed strangely, his lips curled in scorn at his own shadowy thoughts. He surveyed himself from chest to foot, and laughed satisfactorily.

"Is it not his figure, his face? Does my glass deceive me?"

He took a bundle of letters from his pocket, yet wet and limp with salt-water.

"Are these not loving words to me from my father the marquis? Who shall deny it? Will the sea give up its dead? I am the future Lord Atherton."

He restored the parcel to his pocket, and walked on, buried in subtle reflection.

"Milord!" sounded the voice of a fisherman, who spoke a little English.

"Ha! What do you want?" he exclaimed, with a startled air; and then added, composedly: "My nerves are unstrung, good Jean. I am not strong yet. Have you news from the vessel? Is—is my poor friend Lawrence found?"

"No, milord, no more come; only you saved. But we get a trunk from the ship."

"It may be Atherton's—mine, I mean—the Fates prosper me!" muttered the stranger, an expression of gratification settling around his mouth. "Bring it up, Jean, it may be mine. Remember you will have your reward."

"Yes, milord," answered the fisherman, covetously, and hurried away.

Presently he returned, bearing a trunk on his brawny shoulders, and set it down in the hut.

Cyrille Atherton, as he called himself, followed him into the little room, and gazed eagerly upon the relic from the sea.

Yes, his conjecture had proved true; it was his.

Catching a boat-hook from the wall he broke the trunk open, and wistfully examined its contents. Singularly enough, everything was comparatively dry.

There was a purse, wrought by the hands of his sister Allina—his sister; a portrait of Arabella Ca-

ronbert, his beloved—well, she would make him a proud, beautiful wife!

Wasn't it his duty to thank fickle fortune for all this greatness thrust upon him? Thrust upon him? His face grew white as he repeated the words to himself, his hand trembled as he replaced the articles.

Turning away with a half-sigh, a half-curse upon his lips, he sought the open air.

"Charles Lawrence!"

The words sounded like a dying cry upon his ears. He started back shivering, and threw up his hands.

A young girl, with large, luminous eyes and masses of silken raven hair, appeared before him, and gazed upon him steadily, assuringly.

Cursing himself for his folly, he assumed an over-bearing manner and demanded, sharply:

"Did you speak, girl?"

She shook her head and placed her finger upon her lips.

"She means she cannot speak English," he thought, a dark scowl flitting over his brow. "But she must have uttered those words! It could not have been the wind, nor a voice from—pshaw! I am growing fanciful, weak and nervous! I must get away from this place!"

Renspur House, the grand old home of the Marquis of Renspur, was in a state of excitement.

Glorious news had lifted the mantle of gloom that had enveloped all hearts for months.

Cyrille, the young lord, who had been mourned as dead, was alive and coming home to the hearts of his indulgent old father and loving sister—coming home after years of absence in foreign lands.

"I have undergone much hardship and privation, have had two or three malignant fevers which have left my memory somewhat impaired; so, dear ones, you must not think it strange if I am eccentric and forgetful. I need rest and the comforts of home. I yearn to be with you."

Thus read a portion of his letter dated at Rome two months after the wreck of the "Calliope."

Allina, reading it over and over again with dewy eyes, murmured to herself:

"Dear brother, dear Cyrille! how happy I shall be in taking care of him, in coaxing him back to health as only a sister can. Let me see; if he is prospered he will be here in two days. I shall hardly sleep until he comes. It is six long years since I have seen him."

"Yes, Allie, child, a long time," said the marquis, bending over her chair. "I had given him up, poor boy! but Heaven is good, and these old eyes will

rest upon him once more. Then—then I am ready to die."

The maiden glanced tenderly into the aged face framed in its silvery beard and snowy hair, and patting his wrinkled cheek caressingly, replied:

"His presence will renew your strength, dear papa. You will live to enjoy much yet."

A smile of mingled love and gratitude illumined the noble old face, and he pressed a kiss upon his daughter's brow.

Twice the sun rose and set, and as the second twilight came down with its soft hush and silvery calmness the family carriage rolled up the drive and a white, pallid face, with anxious blue eyes, peered from the window. Under the verandah were the marquis and his daughter and all the old servants, who by faithfulness had come to be regarded as little less than members of the family as far as kind treatment and consideration of them went. The barouche halted and the marquis came slowly down the steps, trembling with anticipation. Allie stood a little back to allow him the first greeting, and then:

"Father, dear father!"

The young man alighted and sprang forward to embrace the marquis, but the latter retreated a step, an expression of mingled pain and doubt upon his features, a strange chill upon his heart.

"Am I so terribly changed?" The words left the wanderer's lips in agonized accents. "Oh, father, do you not know me, your only, only boy?"

"Speak to him, papa," interposed Allie, tears starting to her eyes. "He has been ill; see how pale he is! Oh, why do you look at him so?"

The old man hesitated; a look of blended wonder and sorrow flew over his features; he seemed struggling with an inward conviction, and then as he saw his daughter's grief, the reproach in the eyes of his boy, he took his hands and exclaimed, tremulously:

"Forgive me, Cyrille, my son, forgive me. I would not pain you, but you are changed. You will look like yourself ere long; yes, you will look like yourself. Welcome home, welcome!"

Cyrille bent his head upon his father's breast, and smoothed his gray hair tenderly.

Then, with moist eyes, he turned to Allie, and embraced her affectionately.

"There is Herbert waiting to speak to you, faithful old Herbert, who held you in his arms when you were a baby," said Allie, indicating the bald-headed retainer.

Cyrille looked around wonderingly, passed his hand across his brow, and then, with a blank smile, said:

"Herbert? Who? Oh, yes!"

"Have you forgotten me?" queried the old man, with mild reproach.

Cyrille flushed red.

Again that light of painful mistrust shone in the marquis's eyes and his face twitched nervously. The wanderer compressed his lips an instant and then said:

"No, no, not wholly; as I look at you, Herbert, a faint recollection of other scenes returns—of the boat in the wide pond—"

"Yes, yes, my dear lord!" interrupted the old man, gladly.

"Of your—but it is past. I can recall no more. I have been very ill, at times it seems as if I should never regain my former mental clearness."

He sighed wearily, a cloud of regret shadowed his face.

"Don't think of it, dear Cyrille," said Allie, pleadingly. "In a little while you will be well and strong. Come, let us go in, your old room is ready for you. You must lie down a short time before you dress for dinner."

"Dear sister, how sweet it is to hear your voice again," he murmured, gratefully.

She replied with a wistful smile and accompanied him to the door of his room.

While going through the halls he made frequent allusion to familiar objects, and Allie left him, confident that he would soon recover his memory under the influence of home associations.

A week passed.

Cyrille feigned illness and objected to seeing visitors, but seemed to take great pleasure in talking with Allie of bygone days.

She trusted him implicitly, believing firmly in his identity, never dreaming that this was a stroke of policy to extort information concerning the people and country round about. It would have been strange if she had.

Cyrille in face, figure, and voice was before her, yet, it is true, as when he went away, but time tries everybody.

On the seventh day Cyrille came downstairs, elegantly dressed, and apparently feeling more cheerful than at any time since he came home.

Allie was delighted at his convalescence, and was as merry as a bird.

The marquis too came forth from the singular melancholy that had of late oppressed him, and talked of his son's adventures while away, of the friends who were waiting to see him, and finally concluded with the question:

"But what became of young Lawrence, your friend of whom you wrote to us?"

"Have I never told you?" answered the young man, striving to keep his features composed. "Alas, it is a sad story. He was lost—drowned within a foot of me, and I could not save him. Ah! that was a terrible night, it racks my heart to think of it. Some day I will tell you all about it, but now let me speak of her, whom I have not yet seen, of Arabella. Will she be angry, think you, because I have not yet called?"

And he glanced anxiously from one to the other.

"No," said Allie, at last, "she knows you have been ill, and has not expected you. But she has sent a messenger to inquire for you every day!"

"Bless her heart! I must delay no longer; I am strong enough to ride over. You will go with me, won't you, father?"

The marquis nodded assent, and a half-hour later the three drove up to the elegant mansion of Sir Frederic Caronbert. On the lawn were several young ladies and gentlemen, all of whom came forward, as the carriage stopped, to greet Cyrille. Running his eyes rapidly over them, and comparing them with pictures he had studied assiduously, he succeeded in calling each one by name, and in an easy, graceful way that charmed them, and gratified his father.

"Sir Frederic, as I live! and not a day older than when I left!" exclaimed Cyrille as the baronet appeared.

"My dear friend, how glad I am to see you, to be at home again among my own kind and kin."

"Cyrille, my boy, welcome. They told me you were dull and absent-minded, but it was all paternal solicitude. You are looking finely." Then as he turned to greet the marquis, he added: "You will find Belle in the rear drawing-room."

Cyrille bowed his thanks, excused himself, and hastily entered the house. Once secure from view, his expression changed, his brow grew dark, his eyes gleamed with something like remorse. It passed in an instant, however, and then he boldly entered a room which he supposed to be the one indicated.

Fortune favoured him. Before him in a large chair, with one hand resting upon the arm, and her glorious head inclined forward, sat a regally beautiful woman.

He paused, as if enthralled, and his breath came faster. Anon she turned her head, a glad light crept into her midnight eyes, a soft flush stole over her white cheek, and she arose, extending two little hands.

"Cyrille!" she exclaimed, in a low, silvery voice.

"Belle, my darling!"

He hazarded the words, hardly knowing what else to say, and gazed upon her anxiously to note the effect. It was all that could be desired, the consciousness of love irradiated her face, and again the warm blood coursed over it. Leading her to a seat he dropped upon a hassock at her feet, and referred tenderly to the hours they had passed together in previous years, concluding with:

"And now, dearest, we must be parted no more. Tell me, when shall we join our hands, our lives? I am impatient, dear one, I cannot wait longer. During the long years of my absence that has been my hope, the beacon of my future."

"Why you know, Cyrille, we spoke of that before you left, and you named the time two months after you should return. If I still loved you, you were unkind enough to add."

"And you are true, you do love me, my peerless one?"

He spoke rapturously and something in his voice startled her. Drawing her hand from his shoulder, where it had rested, she directed her eyes upon him sharply, and her face grew serious.

He was about to ask an explanation when the door opened and the baronet entered.

Arising, Belle gave her father her chair, behind which she placed herself, while Cyrille leaned lightly upon the mantelshelf.

The baronet commenced a conversation with Cyrille about his travels, and while they talked Belle remained silent, resting her arms upon the back of the fauteuil, and gazing at Cyrille steadily, as if she would read his inmost thoughts.

And as she watched the motion of his lips strange feelings came over her; a vague, shadowy distrust hovered over her mind.

She was not alone with him again during his call, and a week elapsed before he again had an opportunity to press his suit.

In the meantime a visitor had arrived at Caronbert House—a low-browed, swarthy Italian, an artist of renown in his own land, so report said.

Allie, who nourished a penchant for distinguished foreigners, was very eager to call and make his ac-

quaintance, but Cyrille was not very much pleased at the idea, he had seen enough of them he declared petulantly.

Nevertheless he was at last obliged to succumb to his sister's solicitations, and he consented to attend the reception given in honour of Signor Varian.

"It is to be a unique affair," Allie exclaimed, joyously. "In addition to tableaux and charades there is to be a sort of panoramic drama, if anybody knows what that is. It is an Italian whim to astonish us Britons, I presume."

Cyrille shrugged his shoulders, and laughed scornfully.

The much-anticipated night came, and the long drawing-room of the Caronbert house was filled with the nobility and gentry of the surrounding country. Cyrille, finely attired, with the queenly Arabella upon his arm, was the cynosure of all eyes; the ladies admired him, the gentlemen envied him in like ratio.

As yet Cyrille had not met Signor Varian, but Belle promised him an introduction after the first piece.

This was shortly announced, and the curtain of the little stage went up, revealing a wild, bleak shore, with the waters in commotion, and a ship scudding under bare poles in the distance.

Belle watched her companion's features narrowly, but they wore a calm, composed smile, and betrayed nothing.

The canvas moved on, and pictured the ship upon the sands, torn and riven by the elements, while the lightnings flashed, the hail beat down and the thunder roared.

These voices of nature were imitated to perfection, and Cyrille bit his lip slightly, so vividly did it remind him of a scene in his own life.

"Isn't it nice, Cyrille?" said Belle, with assumed enthusiasm.

"Very fair indeed, but the canvas moves too slowly," he answered, knitting his brow a little.

Again the scene changed, and in the midst of black, foaming waters appeared a spar with two men upon it, one of whom was clinging with one hand, and gazing upon his companion as if supplicating him to save him.

"They have put your face on the canvas, my lord," said the young lady, near Cyrille.

"Yes, quite an honour," he rejoined, laughingly, but there was a coldness settling upon his heart.

"Save me, Charlie! Save me!"

The cry seemed to come from him who had a slight hold upon the spar, and as the marquis heard it he uttered an exclamation of mingled wonder and horror.

Cyrille grew deathly pale, and Belle could feel his arm tremble.

The audience were now strangely interested.

The next scene disclosed only one man upon the spar, and he clutching a rope which two men had thrown from the shore; his companion was represented as sinking beneath the waves.

"This seems like your adventures, the wreck of the 'Calliope,' Cyrille!" said Belle, gazing penetratingly into his face.

"Yes, very much; it pains me because it reminds me of my friend's death," he responded very naturally.

The maiden grew perplexed; there was a conflict in her mind.

The next scene portrayed a hut and a man standing in an attitude of astonishment, with a dark-haired girl before him, the waves forming the perspective.

Cyrille struggled to control himself, and set his teeth.

Again the canvas moved, and a man was seen lying upon a rude cot in a fisherman's hut; beside him stood the Italian girl with the dark, flowing hair.

Suddenly the canvas disappeared—a real couch, real persons assumed its place. icy chills crept over Cyrille's frame.

Anon the form arose from the bed, slipped from the stage, came through the audience, and placing his hands on Cyrille's shoulder, ejaculated:

"Traitor! Impostor! Look upon me! I am not dead!"

The supposed Cyrille grew ghastly, his teeth chattered, his eyes rolled, the cords stood upon his face. He tried to speak, but only a rattling sound issued from his throat and he sank to the floor.

Wonderment, confusion, consternation followed. In the midst of the excitement the marquis struggled through the crowd, and fell with a cry of joy upon the stranger's breast.

"You are my boy, my heart answers to you; there is no doubt, no shadow on my mind! Oh, Cyrille, my own, my own!"

"Cyrille! Yes, this is Cyrille!" answered Belle, taking one of her real lover's hands.

"But there was a wonderful resemblance. Who is this man?"

These and many other remarks of the guests reminded Cyrille that he had an explanation to make.

Lawrence was now resuscitated, and sat staring in almost an imbecile manner. It was his first attempt at crime, and it had worked upon his nerves.

"I didn't murder you. No, I didn't murder you," he wailed, beating his hands together.

"No, not in a legal sense, but you let me sink when you could have rescued me," answered Cyrille. "It was but an instant before the rope was thrown that I begged you to give me your hand, but you would not. I was carried away upon a jutting point of land by the waves, and there lay until an hour after you were brought ashore, when I was found by this girl, who has come home with me to be my wife's maid. Once, Charles Lawrence, you were my friend; perhaps poverty made you do this. Go, and be a better man. I have no wish to persecute you, since Heaven has saved my life."

"My noble brother!" murmured Allie. A few weeks subsequently Belle became Cyrille's wife, and happiness has smiled upon them.

Lawrence, earnest in his repentance, has lived a sober, industrious life thus far. G. W. S.

THE MYRTLEVILLE SCANDAL.

It commenced by Mrs. Sawyer's arrival at Mrs. Muffitt's early in the forenoon, evidently in a state of great excitement and full of news. With an air of profound mystery she drew Mrs. Muffitt from the garden to the sitting-room, and said to her:

"What do you think has happened?"

Now Mrs. Sawyer was well known in Myrtleville as "newsw," as one who had no opportunities of collecting the most reliable and startling items of information regarding the sayings and doings of the Myrtlevillians. Accordingly, Mrs. Muffitt prepared her mind for tidings of moment.

"What is it?" she asked, settling down in a chair for a "good talk."

"You'll not tell I told you?"

"Never."

"Because you see it wasn't intended for me to hear. I just went over to Mrs. Seymour's this morning, and Mrs. Kately was in there, and the door stood open, and I couldn't but hear what was said, you know, and—"

"But what was it?" cried Mrs. Muffitt, as Mrs. Sawyer paused for breath.

"Fred Seymour and Belle Grainger have eloped."

"Eloped!"

"Mrs. Seymour was just telling Mrs. Kately as I went in. As soon as they saw me coming they began to talk about the news in this morning's paper; but you can't throw me off the track in that way."

"Oh, my goodness!" cried Mrs. Muffitt, suddenly, as if some inspiration had seized her.

"You've heard something too?" cried the widow.

"No, but I saw Belle Grainger this morning, quite early, passing by here, in the direction of the station, and she had on her travelling dress, and her waterproof, and carried her satchel."

"Going to meet him by the eight o'clock train. Oh, the sly, deceitful thing! Think of her poor father!"

"And her sick mother. It is awful! And everybody knows Fred Seymour is as good as engaged to Susy Belknap."

"There! I'll go right over to Belknap's," cried Mrs. Sawyer. "Somebody ought to break it gently to Susan. Poor girl! No wonder they went off slyly."

And away bustled Mrs. Sawyer to find Mrs. Belknap and Susy in the sitting-room, sewing. It was a keen satisfaction to tell the news there, for Mrs. Belknap, being in delicate health, and possessing ample means, kept a servant, and lived in a style of refinement that Myrtleville generally condemned as "putting on airs."

To take her "down a peg," as Mrs. Sawyer mentally resolved to do, was a vulgar triumph she enjoyed greatly in anticipation. But it was in anticipation only.

Mrs. Belknap and her daughter received the news in a quiet way, as if the gossip possessed no especial interest for them, asking no questions, and manifesting no obliquity.

The story had grown a little on its way through Mrs. Muffitt's sitting-room, and Mrs. Sawyer had now a full description of the runaway bride's costume, and the train too was specified by which the young couple travelled.

But after Mrs. Sawyer had gone to take her news elsewhere, Susy turned a very pale face to her mother, asking, pitifully:

"Oh, mamma, can it be true?"

"I will go over to Mrs. Seymour's, dear, if you wish it."

"Not for the world. If it is true we must never

let anyone know how we feel it," she said. And her lip quivered. "Fortunately no one knows we are actually engaged. If it is not true—"

"It seems to come very direct," said Mrs. Belknap, as she drew her daughter into a close, motherly embrace. "Mrs. Sawyer is a terrible gossip and busy-body, but I never knew her to be guilty of absolute falsehood."

"Mrs. Kately is very intimate with Mrs. Seymour. I have heard Fred say they were schoolmates. So it is quite natural for her to be telling Mrs. Kately, and speak of something else when Mrs. Sawyer went in."

"I can scarcely believe it of Fred," said Mrs. Belknap.

"Nor I. And Belle, too, who has been my friend so long, and her only interest in Fred seemed to be in his love for me. Oh, mother! I can't believe it."

In the meantime the story was spreading from house to house, gaining a little here and a little there as it was repeated.

Mrs. Grey had seen Fred Seymour going in the direction of the station at half-past seven, and it did not seem to occur to the gossips that, as his business was in London, this was a sight of daily occurrence.

Another one had always thought Miss Grainger's quiet, modest manners covered a deceitful heart.

Some pitied Susy, some congratulated her upon her escape.

The young couple were discovered to have every fault the imagination of their accusers could summon up, and Mrs. Belknap and Mrs. Seymour, shared the odium and pity with Mrs. Grainger, who certainly should have attended more strictly to the education of her daughter, and given her more careful moral training.

Every mother in Myrtleville was piously thankful it was not her daughter who had so disgraced herself, and the daughters, as a general rule, secretly wished they had had Miss Grainger's chance, for Fred Seymour was decidedly a beau in Myrtleville, and his mother was known to have a property from her late husband that would make the young man independent when, in the course of nature, it reverted to him. He was engaged on one of the evening papers of the great metropolis, and considered talented and upright, a man who in time would make a name and position of honour.

His attentions to Susy Belknap, though the fact of their engagement had not yet been published, had been too marked to escape the notice of eyes so prying as those possessed by the good people of Myrtleville, and his inconstancy was a matter of marvel, as Susy was a maiden whom any man might have been proud to win.

When the four o'clock train came in Mr. Grainger, a little, nervous man, all excitability, was amazed at the sympathizing faces that greeted him on the platform.

A chill like death seized his heart. For years his wife had been an invalid, suffering from spine complaint. Had she died while he was away?

White as a sheet, he turned to a friend standing near, saying:

"Why do you look so at me? What is the matter at home?"

"My poor friend, have you heard nothing?"

A choking sensation came over the loving husband, but he struggled against it, saying:

"Quick, tell me? What is it—Mary?"

"No, Mrs. Grainger is as well as usual, I believe; but there is a very sad story to break to you regarding your daughter."

Wrath took the place of terror.

"My daughter!" cried the little man, furiously. "Who dares to carry stories about my daughter?"

"Well—you—see," stammered his friend, "the women folks say she eloped this morning with Fred Seymour."

"Fred Seymour! Why he's head over ears in love with Susy Belknap. My Belle! Why she has been engaged for two years to Lieutenant Weston of the navy, though he did not publish the fact for the benefit of all the tatters in Myrtleville."

"I am afraid," was the reply, "that it was the fact of these engagements that drove them to secrecy and elopement."

"I tell you the whole story is false!" roared the excited father. "I'll make these mischief-makers eat their own words! My Belle, indeed! They must be crazy."

But on his way home Mr. Grainger met the report in so many places, heard it in such plausible versions, that he entered his wife's room with a very grave face, from which all angry excitement had vanished.

"Where is Belle, Mary?" he asked.

"She went to London this morning to do some shopping. She will stay at her Aunt Maria's to-night."

"Did young Seymour go up by the same train?"

"I suppose so. He usually goes at eight, and that was the train Belle took."

Mr. Grainger was on the point of telling his wife the whole story, but on second thought restrained the impulse. Sure, in his own fatherly confidence in his gentle, modest child, that there was some mistake admitting of explanation, he said nothing. After all, it was a subject for congratulation that none of the busybodies of Myrtleville had invaded the sick-room, and he easily made some trivial excuse for going out again. He was determined to sift the gossip thoroughly before alarming the invalid, and the first visit was to the telegraph office at the railway station.

"Is Belle at your house?" flashed over the wires, and was carried to a handsome house in town.

"Yes. Will be down by the next train," was the answer; for poor Belle imagined there was death or frightful illness to cause her father's message, when a visit to her aunt was so common an occurrence.

Satisfied on this point, Mr. Grainger quietly waited till the train came in, walked up the street with his daughter on his arm, left her at home, and started out to defy all Myrtleville.

From house to house he travelled, with exemplary patience, and followed the snakelike coils of the story, till he faced Mrs. Sawyer, who earnestly assured him:

"Mrs. Seymour and Mrs. Kately were in the sitting-room as I came in the back-way through the kitchen. They were talking, and just as I got to the door, Mrs. Seymour told Mrs. Kately that her son and Belle Grainger had eloped. They saw me then, and Mrs. Seymour said, very carelessly: 'Here are the morning papers, Mrs. Kately,' just to change the conversation."

"And you rushed off to carry the news all over Myrtleville?" said Mr. Grainger.

"Well, I thought it must be true, from such authority."

"Pshaw! You misunderstood what was said."

"I tell you, I heard her, as plain as I hear you now."

"Telling Mrs. Kately her son and my daughter had eloped?"

"Yes. I'd swear it on my oath!" said Mrs. Sawyer, as if there were several other ways of swearing, if she chose to take her choice.

"Suppose you stop over to Mrs. Kately's with me?"

"Well, I will."

But, to Mrs. Sawyer's discomfiture, Mrs. Kately denied the story entirely. Mrs. Seymour had never given her any such information, either in confidence or otherwise.

Mrs. Sawyer tearfully persisted in her story; and finally, the trio went to Mrs. Seymour's.

The hero of the story was by this time at home, and eating his supper, when the visitors entered.

It was an awkward story to tell, but it was told, and Mrs. Seymour's face was a picture of indignant surprise.

"I!" she cried, "I say my Fred had eloped with Belle Grainger! Why Mrs. Sawyer, you must be dreaming!"

"You said so. I heard you," snubbed the widow.

"Said what?"

"You said, distinctly, 'Belle Grainger ran away with my son this morning.'"

At this point Mrs. Seymour burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, to the great consternation of her audience.

She laughed till she was obliged to wipe the tears from her eyes; when, catching sight of Mr. Grainger's disturbed face, she said, with sudden gravity:

"Pardon me, Mr. Grainger. I see I have most innocently caused you a serious annoyance. The truth is this—Fred, as you know, has all the morning papers sent to him by the early train, and many of the neighbours come in to borrow them. Mrs. Kately always likes to see the 'Sun,' and I save it for her; but this morning your daughter stopped on her way to the station for a paper to read as she rode to town, and took the 'Sun.' When Mrs. Kately came for the papers I said to her: 'Belle Grainger has run away with my 'Sun' this morning!'"

"And all Myrtleville has been busy with the scandal Mrs. Sawyer manufactured out of your remark," cried Mr. Grainger. "I can only hope she will be as active in contradicting as she was in circulating it."

But to this day Mrs. Sawyer persists in declaring that she can't see where she went to blame, after all. Anybody, she is quite sure, might have made such a mistake on the same grounds.

Pretty Susy was not left long in doubt, for Fred, having drawn from Mrs. Sawyer the confession that she "thought it a duty to tell the Belknaps the first thing," hastened over to his betrothed wife to vent his indignation against all tattlers and mischief-

makers, and very soon Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Seymour's wedding-cards put the final contradiction to the Myrtleville scandal. A. S.

FACTIÆ.

LADIES AND HIGH LATITUDES.—Daughters of earth in one point differ from their mother. A wad of false hair at the back of the female head maintains a high temperature at the poll.—*Punch.*

MALAPROPRIANA.—Mrs. Malaprop, good soul! proposes to distribute tracts among teetotalers, who, she regrets to hear, are living in a state of spiritual destitution.—*Punch.*

MORE JUSTICE WANTED.—Five grocers in Dunmow have been fined for serving out objectionable butter. Why have there been no proceedings, then, against the speakers who enlarded the candidates for the Dunmow Fitch.—*Punch.*

THE GARB OF OLD GAUL.
Young Laird (to newly-appointed footman): "Well, Donald, how do you like trousers?"
Donald (heretofore a gillie, who had never worn anything but kilts): "Aweel, sir, I find 'em vera 'uncomfortable aboot the sleeves!"—*Punch.*

CAUSE AND EFFECT.
Madge: "I say, Arthur! Mamma won't be pleased if she finds us lying about like this, instead of sitting up!"
Arthur: "Well, Madge, mamma shouldn't treat us to a donkey ride; you know!"—*Punch.*

CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER CASES.
Nurse: "Why don't you go and have a dip in the sea, Mr. Charles? I bathed with the children this morning, and it was delightful!"
Mr. Charles: "Ah, Mary, it's all very well for you; but recollect my back hair is a fixture!"—*Punch.*

OZONE-NICE!
Boatman: "Get wet in the water! I should think we do. That's one reason why we're so dry ashore; but it's the salt in the air as finishes it. It gets through the skin and brings a kind o' thirst. You'll feel it after a week or two, and then you'll never 'ave out a boat again without arstin' the poor old boatman to 'ave a glass!"—*Fun.*

"SPEAK FOR YOURSELF!"
Jack (who has a neat leg and foot): "I say, Tom, don't you think knickerbockers would be a very sensible sort of costume for the kind of trip you and I propose?"
Tom (who is without those advantages): "Yes—but not for two old fogies like you and me!"—*Punch.*

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.—The subject of impression^s at first sight was being talked over in a family circle when the mother of the family said: "I always form an idea of a person on first sight, and generally find it correct." "Mamma," said her youthful son, "Well, my dear, what is it?" "I want to know what your opinion of me was when you first saw me."

OH, NO! WE NEVER MENTION HER!
Tourist (to Mariner): "Have you ever sailed in the 'Immortalite'?"
Mariner: "Can't say I ever heard of her, sir."
Tourist: "Surely you have. It's spelt I-m-m-o-r-t-a-l-i-t-e."
Mariner: "Ay, sir, you mean the 'Mortal Light.' Know her well, sir!"—*Fun.*

THE SCHOOL TREAT.
Young Lady (to little girl): "My dear, what's your name?"
Little Girl: "Eh?"
Young Lady: "What's your name, my dear?"
Little Girl: "Oh, we didn't come here to say our catechism! We came to play and enjoy ourselves. Come along, Alice, and have a donkey ride!"—*Punch.*

"THE BETTER THE DAY," ETC.
Rustic (to Curate who dabbles in Photography): "I'd be turrible much obliged, zur, if you'd map off my pictur, zur!"
Curate: "Well, my man, I'll take your likeness for you. When will you come?"
Rustic: "Well, zur, if you've no 'jections, I be mostly cleaned up and has moast time o' Sunday mornin's, zur!"—*Punch.*

A LIKELY CUSTOMER.
Lady: "Oh, dear, what a horrid looking monster!"
Boatman: "Lor, m'm! he's only a young 'un, a cogger beauty; the spotted ringtailed hanglet fish, one of the most woracious warrants of the ocean, bites like mad. I kept 'un alive a purpose, m'm. Maybe you'd like to give a shilling or two to take 'un home."—*Fun.*

THE OFFICIAL PARADISE.—When the right honourable and amiable gentleman, who was President of

the Board of Works, and is Judge-Advocate-General, first entered on the duties of his former office, he made, it will be recollected, a speech, wherein, amongst other negative qualifications for the performance of them, the advantage of being no market-gardener was one which he claimed credit for. In the capacity, to use a questionable expression, which Mr. Ayrton has vacated, he is succeeded by Mr. Adam. If worthy of his name, whether he prove to be an Adile or no, Adam will at any rate be a gardener.—*Fun.*

A SIGN ON THE DOOR OF A PARIS LODGING-HOUSE READS:
"Music Lessons—Piano and Big Drum—from 8 o'clock a.m., to 10 o'clock p.m." Pleasant house to live in, we should think, especially for a poet.

EXCLUSIVENESS.
Host: "Nice party, ain't it, Major Le Spurger? Tigh and low, rich and poor—most people are welcome to this 'ousal! This is 'Liberty 'All,' this, is! No false pride or 'umbug about me! I am a self-made man, I am!"

The Major: "Very nice party, indeed, Mr. Shoddy. How proud your father and mother must feel! Are they here?"

Host: "Well, not 'Ang it all, you know, one must draw the line somewhere!"—*Punch.*

BE SURE YOU'RE RIGHT.

"Be sure you're right, then go ahead!"
That's what a brave man wisely said;
And every man in wisdom's light
Can surely tell the wrong from right,
So that, the evil knowing, he
May work for good and victory.

There may be some who'll gibe and sneer
At honest effort; but 'tis clear
That he who dares to do the right
Shall some day conquer in the light,
If, heeding not the scoffers' cry,
He march right on ever faithfully.

The grandest victories ever won
Are blessings sent for good deeds done;
And richer far than crowns of gold,
Or gems of fabulous wealth untold,
Is that bright crown of gratitude
The world gives to its brave and good.

Oh, toiler standing at the plough!
Oh, workman with the sweating brow!
Yours is the mission to fulfil
The carrying out of Heaven's will;
And yours the triumph of success,
If bravely on you ever press.

Take courage, then, and do your best;
There'll surely come a day of rest,
When sweetest flowers shall straw your way,
And chill December turn to May;
March with a hero's firmest tread—
"Be sure you're right, then go ahead!"

C. D.

THE death, in Germany, is announced of the Princess Eleonore von Schwarzenberg, 61 years of age. She was a person of remarkable beauty, and created something of a furore in London in 1838 on the occasion of the Queen's coronation, to which her husband had been deputed by the Austrian Government.

Two of the greatest sensations of the Exhibition in Vienna at present are the jewels of the Countess of Dudley and the Sultan of Turkey. Each set is displayed upon a coloured velvet table, and includes coronet, bracelets, earrings, necklet, hair-plum, and other ornaments—all of them making up a grand assemblage of diamonds, pearls, and precious stones, which are literally dazzling in their brilliancy. Their value is said to be upwards of one million sterling.

A FATAL BEVERAGE.—Among many other things it was said that the Shah of Persia, having been induced to taste the German porter-beer during his visit to Berlin, at once ordered a dozen bottles to be forwarded to an uncle in Teheran, whom he suspected of growing too popular during his absence, adding, as he pocketed the receipt given him at the parcel delivery office, "If he can stand that I have nothing more to say, and must bow to the will of Allah!"

LONDON INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION, 1874.—The rules for the classes of the second divisions devoted to manufactures have recently been issued. These relate principally to the arrangement in classes, which will be as follows:—Class 8, for lace (hand and machine made); class 9, civil engineering (including sanitary apparatus and constructions, cement and plaster works, etc.); architectural and building contrivances; class 10, heating, by all methods and kinds of fuel; class 11, leather, including saddlery and harness, and manufacture of leather; class 12, bookbinding; and class 13, foreign wines. The rules further prescribe that duplicates are inadmis-

sible, that retail prices should be stated when possible, that exhibitors provide pulleys, etc., that exhibitors pay for gas and water. The days for receiving the different classes of goods are also furnished, and the forms in which, and the person to whom, preliminary application should be made.

STATISTICS.

OUR FORTIFICATIONS.—A Parliamentary return recently issued contains a statement of the expenditure out of the Consolidated Fund in respect of our fortifications, so far as was actually recorded up to the 31st of March last. The total amount recorded up to that date was 6,529,392*l.* which was distributed as follows: Portsmouth, 2,504,584*l.*, Plymouth, 1,489,431*l.*, Pembroke, 305,098*l.*, Portland, 362,337*l.*, Gravesend, 276,156*l.*, Chatham, 275,398*l.*, Sheerness, 338,297*l.*, Dover, 293,525*l.*, Cork, 150,022*l.*, providing and fitting iron shields, 324,974*l.*, incidental expenses, works, 145,729*l.*, experiments, 14,393*l.*, surveys, 23,524*l.*, legal and other incidental expenses, 23,024*l.* The balance of expenditure not brought to charge by the end of March is estimated at 20,000*l.*

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

PRESERVED GINGER.—Preserved ginger is made by scalding the young roots till they become soft, then peel them in cold water, frequently changing it, and after this they are put into a thin syrup; from which, in a few days, they are removed to the jars, and a rich syrup poured over them.

TO USE COLD POULTRY.—This dish is made of the remains of poultry. A little butter is melted and mixed with flour, salt, pepper, herbs, and mushrooms which have been scalded and cut up small. When this begins to turn yellow, a mixture of equal parts of white wine and gravy stock is poured in. After it has boiled for twenty minutes, the piece of any sort of roast poultry, having been nicely cut, are put into the sauce. It is left over the fire for a quarter of an hour and served. **ANOTHER.**—Take poultry which has been dressed the day before and cut it up. Put it into a stewpan with thickened butter and flour. Add half a glass of stock. Let it simmer. Before serving put in small pickles cut in slices.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE increase of flax under cultivation in Ireland this year is eight thousand acres.

AMONG the novel manufactures lately introduced into Japan are those of paper hats to imitate felt ones, and paper "slates" for schoolboys.

THE increased consumption of foreign potatoes is remarkable. In the last seven months the value was 1,829,153*l.* against 353,005*l.* in the same period last year.

THE Dunbar fishermen entertain the belief that artillery firing frightens the herring off the coast, and recently, by some sharp practice, they effectually prevented the local company from engaging in a competition.

WITH reference to the forthcoming balloon trip across the Atlantic, it is stated that Professor Wise reckons confidently upon reaching England or Ireland in 60 hours. The whole cost of the undertaking is calculated to amount to 2,000*l.*

THE yearly production of maple sugar in the United States, its territories and the British possessions, may be fairly considered as amounting to 60,000,000 pounds, with molasses to the amount of 50,000,000 gallons.

THE death of Mr. Frank Mori, at the age of fifty-two, is announced. He was a son of the Mori, a famed violinist, who was so long connected with the King's Theatre when Spagnoletti was conductor. Mr. Frank Mori was the composer of several popular songs.

JUSTICE TO IRELAND AT LAST!—A potato stalk was dug in the garden at Suirmount, the residence of Alexander Boyd, Esq., recently, which measured eight feet in length! It was of the flounder kind, and had beneath it some very fine potatoes of excellent quality.

ONE of the most important art exhibitions ever held in Scotland has been recently opened in Aberdeen. The object of the exhibition is to complete the Aberdeen County and Municipal Buildings, one of the finest granite edifices in the world, built at a cost of over 60,000*l.* The exhibition was formally opened to the public by the Earl of Kintore, in the presence of a large assembly. Most of the pictures are gems of their respective styles. Among those who have sent pictures to the exhibition is the Queen, who kindly forwarded several of the finest pictures from Windsor and Buckingham and Balmoral Palaces.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. J.—Under any name he chooses to assume.
R. W.—Allow us to direct you to the customary and uniform mode. That is all that can be said.

JACK.—Cass will serve the purpose. Booths were more frequent, we presume, in those days. Cass will also serve to mean a hut.

FOLLY.—You must be quite aware that it is completely out of our province to answer your most remarkable question. Any medical practitioner will advise you. It is manifest that we cannot dissect such an ugly matter.

PURRY.—Your words would make an agreeable song. Consult a music publisher, of whom there are several of note in the somewhat patrician district of New Bond Street. The song might, we think, be quite fitly set to music. Beyond this we are unable to advise you.

BEN R.—Church Bells is a good subject for a poem, and it has been written on by Keble. We cannot highly approve of your present performance. The sentiment is graceful, but the execution is altogether of considerably minor worth. Even poets ought to obey the small rules of the average grammar of the language. Thanks, however, for your good intention.

INQUIRER.—1. It is impossible to say. 2. The Irish certainly first colonised Scotland, driving before them the native Pictish race. The remains of the Pictish race rest in many monuments recently discovered, as at St. Andrews. Ultimately the Saxons dispossessed the other men, and the formation of the neat distinction between the Highlands and the Lowlands was the natural result.

S. R.—Arcana is a term in alchemy applied to various preparations without any precise meaning. Leland says Arcana is a thing secret, incorporeal, and immortal, which can only be known to man by experience, for it is the virtue of each thing, which operates a thousand times more than the thing itself. In ancient medicine and pharmacy a nostrum. The word is still occasionally used in the plural—Arcana—secrets, mysteries, in the titles of books, as Arcana of Chemistry—a book professing to contain a full exposition of the mysteries of that art.

TRO.—Yes, you are quite correct. The latest theory respecting Shakespeare which has been gravely propounded for our acceptance is that he was for some considerable time employed as a compositor in the printing-office of Richard Field, who was a native of Stratford-on-Avon, and who succeeded to the business of the celebrated Vantrollier, in London. This theory is defended and illustrated most ably and with very apposite quotations from our great bard, and is altogether a curiosity of literature. Considering the number of professions which have already been attributed to Shakespeare, we may easily extend our credulity so far as to accept one more.

NATIVE.—The line "Coming events cast their shadows before" occurs in Campbell, Lockhart's Warning, and the same author (Pleasures of Hope) wrote the familiar verse, "Like angel's visits few and far between." The passage "Hell has no fury like a woman scorned" is in Shakespeare, and we may add that the Avonian bard is strictly correct in his somewhat intense truism. Or, as has been elsewhere expressed:

"Who slights a woman's love cuts deep
And wakes a brood of snakes that sleep
Beneath a bed of roses."

Regarding your other query we cannot confidently say, though we should be strongly inclined to reply in the affirmative.

ALEXIS.—The series of the Dukes of Brunswick is in itself tolerably momentous and is vast in the large volume of its European consequences. It measures, with a fair degree of tolerable accuracy, the whole area of modern European history, dating from the thirteenth century; and thus far it runs in times more recent. 1. The Duke of Brunswick had learned the art of war under Frederick the Great. That renowned warrior had elevated the sands of Brandenburg into the high position of a kingdom of European importance, stamped also with the distinct individuality of its ruler. 2. The Duke of Brunswick was generalissimo of the great coalition reared for Louis XVI.; he failed at his earlier campaign, but was killed at the decisive battle of Jena. He was the Alcibiades of the new revolution, endeavouring to govern yet striving to control it. He failed in the attempt and only precipitated or accelerated the early movement. Defeated in his earlier projects he relinquished his military commission, retired to his paternal estate yet limited dominions, and fell, while splendidly fighting against the Frenchmen, at the battle of Jena. It is to this man

that Scott refers in a memorable passage. He there entitles him the "New Arminius" of the time. 3. His militant subjects, or those of his duchy, resolved to avenge the death of their ruler and their chief. They clad themselves in hues of the profoundest sorrow, and of the deepest profundity of regret. Such was the noted origin of what we call the "Black Brunswickers." This Duke died at Quatre Bras. The other is the equivocal hero of recent exploits. But the injured Caroline of Brunswick was also a daughter of the fine old commander.

TRICKS.—Magic properly signifies the doctrine of the Magi; but the Magi being supposed to have acquired their extraordinary skill from familiar spirits or other supernatural information, the word magic acquired the signification it now bears, viz., a science which teaches to perform wonderful and surprising acts, by the application of certain means, which procure the assistance and interposition of demons. The magicians of antiquity were generally acquainted with certain secret powers, properties and affinities of bodies, and were hence enabled to produce surprising effects, to astonish the vulgar; and these surprising effects, produced by natural causes, procured them credit in their pretensions to supernatural and miraculous power. Astrology, divination, enchantments and witchcraft were parts of this fanciful science; which, from being truly respectable once, as having had for its object mathematics and natural philosophy, by these means became contemptible, its professors obnoxious, its productions ridiculous, and its illusions mere juggler's tricks. Natural magic is the application of natural philosophy to the production of surprising but yet natural effects.

ROSY DANE.

Why is gentle Rosy Dane
At the pane,
Glancing up and down the street?
Why that ruby, mantling flush
On each dimpled cheek? And hush!
You can count each throbbing beat
Of her heart.
Eager for the joys Love's messengers
Impart.
Now she throws the window wide,
And outside,
In the keen and frosty air,
All her sunny curls are tossed.
Take care, thoughtless one, the frost
Chills the hearts of roses fair!
Blight or bloom
Waits each rose; and blight may be
Our Rosy's doom.
Mother wonders why the maid
So long stayed,
Glancing up and down the street—
Wonders at the sudden crash
Of the shutting window—ash—
Wonders at the flying feet.
Rose could tell,
And the letter-carrier, smiling, knows
Full well.
What the maiden hides she knows—
Sly, sly Rose!
"Only just a valentine!"
Love's enchantments can't be wrong—
And she trills a sweet love-song
That will end in "Mine and thine."
Cupid's quest
Now may end; he is here a welcome
Guest.
When June roses, sweet and fair,
On the air,
Fling their perfume far and wide,
Then—to scatter, all life's way,
Blossoms where his feet will stray—
Our sweet Rose will be a bride—
Thus to bless
This bright day with Love's crowning
happiness.
L. S. U.

W., twenty-six, and in business. Respondent must be twenty-three, good looking, and have a little money. JULIA B., tall, fair, fond of music and singing, desires to correspond with a gentleman, tall, fair, about twenty-one, and a tradesman.

LOTTIE C., eighteen, tall, dark hair and eyes. Respondent must be about twenty, tall, handsome, and fond of home.

BELLA, twenty, tall, dark, domesticated, wishes to correspond with a gentleman, tall, fair, good looking, a mechanic, and fond of home.

PAULIE, seventeen, fair, good looking, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and must have a little money; a clerk preferred.

GORDON, medium height, light blue eyes, fair, affectionate and fond of home. Respondent must be fair, loving, and domesticated.

ELLA, twenty-one, fair, of a loving disposition, and a domestic servant, would like to correspond with a steady young man.

DELIA M., twenty-two, a domestic servant, of dark complexion, pretty, and possesses money. Respondent must be about her own age.

PAUL, nineteen, tall, good looking, and fair complexion, wishes to correspond with a young lady, tall, dark, affectionate, and of musical tastes.

FRANCES, twenty, fair complexion and dark hair, would like to correspond with a handsome young man who must be of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

FOLLY, twenty-five, dark-brown hair, gray eyes, and a cook. Respondent must be tall, dark, not more than twenty-six.

R. J. L., twenty-three, tall, dark, and of a loving disposition, desires to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, who must be pretty, and domesticated.

GWYNETH, C., eighteen, dark hair and eyes, well educated, and considered good looking. Respondent must be tall, dark, affectionate, and fond of home.

ROSE, twenty-one, a tradesman's daughter, in good circumstances, well educated, dark, medium height, and of an affectionate and loving disposition, desires to cor-

respond with a gentleman two or three years her senior, who must be affectionate and fond of home.

FAIRIE-ROSE, JACK, a seaman in the Royal Navy, about twenty-two, black hair, dark eyes, and is considered good looking. Respondent must be about twenty, of fair complexion, and a housemaid.

G. L., a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-three, 5ft. 7in., dark auburn hair, dark brown eyes, fair complexion, desires to correspond with a young lady about twenty, who must be pretty, loving and domesticated.

GEORGE, twenty-one, tall, good looking, of literary tastes, and good professional prospects. Respondent must be well educated, of an amiable disposition, and possessing money.

ANNIE, twenty, fair complexion, light auburn hair, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be twenty-four, fair, loving, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

JENNIE, dark hair, gray eyes, thoroughly domesticated, and fond of music and dancing. Respondent must be tall, good looking, loving, and fond of home; a mechanic preferred.

SPARKER JACK, twenty-one, a seaman in the Royal Navy, desires to correspond with a young lady about his own age, with dark hair and eyes, pretty, loving, and domesticated.

JACK TOPHAST, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-four, light hair, blue eyes, and considered good looking, desires to correspond with a young lady, who must be loving and thoroughly domesticated.

JOHN, seventeen, fair, medium height, of a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty, good looking, dark, and fond of home and children.

JOLLY BOB, twenty-three, light hair and eyes, affectionate, possessing a good income, and fond of children. Respondent must be pretty, domesticated and good tempered.

CHARLEY, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-two, 5ft. 6in., dark brown hair, and blue eyes. Respondent must be about twenty, good looking, of a loving disposition, and domesticated.

AMY C., twenty, tall, rather fair, well educated, fond of music and good tempered, wishes to correspond with a tall, fair gentleman about twenty-five, fond of home and children.

CLARA J., nineteen, 5ft. 3in., dark brown hair and eyes, rather dark complexion, desires to correspond with a young man, with dark, curly hair, dark complexion, good looking, and must occupy a good situation.

HARRY B., twenty-four, dark, loving, fond of home and a clerk in a government office. Respondent must be about twenty-four, medium height, pretty, and domesticated.

AUGUS, twenty-three, 5ft. 6in., dark, good looking, and of a loving disposition, wishes to correspond with an affectionate young lady, fond of music, about his own age, and affectionate.

MARION, eighteen, medium height, fair complexion, bright blue eyes, golden hair, and considered very pretty. Respondent must be tall, dark, handsome, about twenty-one, and fond of home and children.

WINIFRED, twenty, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, and considered good looking. Respondent must be fair, good tempered, and affectionate; a mechanic preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

W. T. is responded to by—"Willie L.," in the Royal Navy, with dark hair and blue eyes.

C. M. T. by—"Rose F.," tall and very handsome.

CHRISTOPHER by—"Lively Polly," who thinks she is all he requires.

THOMAS by—"Lillie," who is pretty, loving, and thinks she will suit him.

MARY by—"Alfred," thirty-three, dark complexion, dark hair and eyes, and a brass founder by trade.

HORACE by—"Ella," dark, considered pretty, good tempered, loving, and domesticated.

MARY M. by—"Walter R.," who is domesticated, and affectionate.

AUGUSTUS by—"Emily," tall, fair, pretty, domesticated, and would have no objection to go abroad.

THOMAS by—"Ombra W.," seventeen, fair, considered pretty, loving, domesticated, and well educated.

DANIEL H. by—"Lizzie," nineteen, tall, good looking, and will make an affectionate wife.

DOLLY W. by—"H. F.," who thinks he is all she requires.

J. G. by—"Nellie," dark, good tempered, affectionate, and thoroughly domesticated.

JULIAN T. N. by—"C. C. S.," nineteen, tall, fair, good looking, and domesticated, who thinks she will suit him.

EDWIN C. by—"Ada," seventeen, fair, thoroughly domesticated, of a loving disposition, and a tradesman's daughter.

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